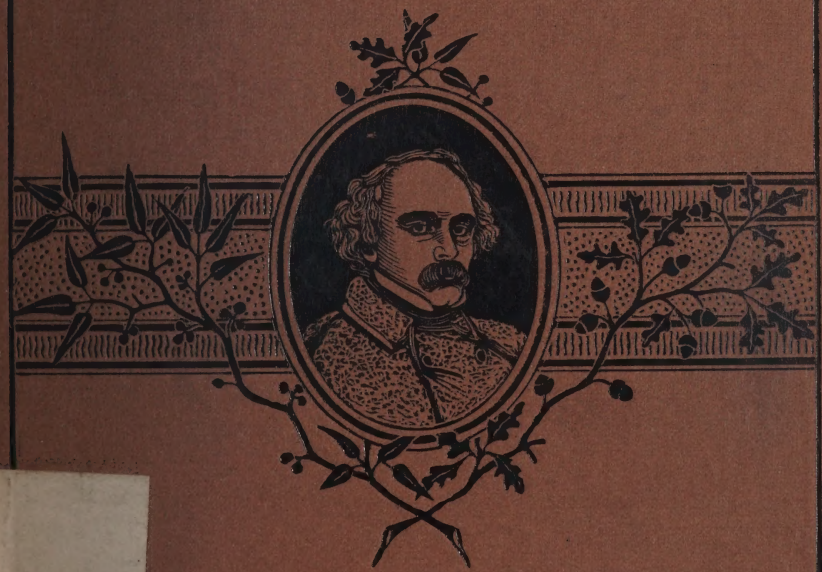
AMERICAN CLASSICS FOR SCHOOLS

HAWTHORNE



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Nathaniel Hawthorne.

American Classics for Schools

HAWTHORNE

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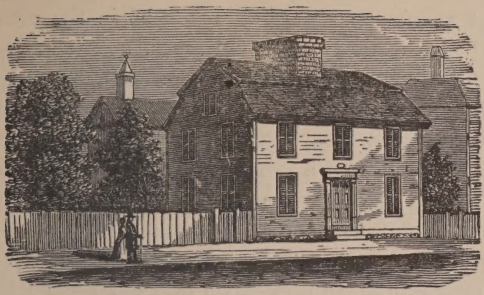

Hawthorne's Early Home in Herbert Street.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

THE old town of Salem, in Massachusetts, was once a famous sea-port, and ships sailed out of its harbor to the ends of the world. In the East Indies so many merchant vessels bore the word Salem on the stern that people there supposed that to be the name of some powerful country, and Mass., which was sometimes added, to be the name of a village in Salem. As Boston and New York grew more important, they drew away trade from the smaller towns, and Salem became less busy. It still has wharves, and large, roomy houses where its rich merchants lived, and shows in many streets the signs of its old prosperity; but one living in Salem is constantly reminded how famous the old town once was rather than how busy it now is.

In an old house in Union Street, in Salem, was born Nathaniel Hawthorne, July 4, 1804, and in one, near by, in Herbert Street, he spent his boyhood. The town had already begun to decline when he was a boy there; and as he walked about the streets and listened to the

talk of people, he seemed always to be in the company of old men, hearing about old times, and watching the signs of decay. There were strange stories of what had happened in former days, especially since Salem was the place where, more than a hundred years before, there had been a terrible outbreak of superstition; men and women had been charged with witchcraft, and had been put to death for it. One of Hawthorne's own ancestors had been a judge who had condemned innocent people to death because he believed them guilty of witchcraft.

His father died before he could know him. He was a sea-captain, and so was his father before him, who was a privateersman in the Revolutionary War. When Hawthorne was a boy of fourteen, he went with his mother to live for a year in a lonely place in Maine. He spent much of his time by himself in the open air. In summer he took his gun and roamed for hours through the woods. On winter nights he would skate by moonlight, all alone, upon the ice of Sebago Pond, and sometimes rest till morning by a great camp-fire which he built before a log-cabin. He led a strange, solitary life, and formed habits of being by himself which he never shook off; but he learned also to observe the world about him, and his eye and ear were trained like those of an Indian.

He went back to Salem at the end of the year, and, when he was ready, went to Bowdoin College, in Maine, where he was a classmate of the poet Longfellow. Another of his college friends was Franklin Pierce, who afterward was President of the United States. Hawthorne had already begun to show that he was to be a writer. "While we were lads together at a country col-

lege," he wrote once to his friend, Horatio Bridge, an officer in the navy, "gathering blueberries in study hours, under those tall academic pines; or watching the great logs, as they tumbled along the current of the Androscoggin; or shooting pigeons and gray squirrels in the woods; or bat-fowling in the summer twilight; or catching trout in that shadowy little stream, which, I suppose, is still wandering riverward through the forest, though you and I will never cast a line in it again, — two idle lads, in short (as we need not fear to acknowledge now), doing a hundred things that the faculty never heard of, or else it had been the worse for us, — still it was your prognostic of your friend's destiny that he was to be a writer of fiction."

After he graduated, in 1825, Hawthorne went back to Salem, and lived there, with only occasional excursions into the country, until 1838. He took long walks in the fields, along the country roads and the neighboring sea-beaches, but much of the time was spent in an upper chamber in the old Herbert Street house. Here he read many books, and sat for hours pondering and writing. Many of the tales which he wrote he destroyed, but one novel called *Fanshawe* was published; it was quite unlike what he afterward wrote, and was so little regarded that very few copies could be traced when, years afterward, the interest which people had come to have in everything of Hawthorne's led to a reprint of it. He sent little stories to magazines, and here and there a reader was found who wondered at their strange beauty, but most passed them by. At length, through the help of his old friend Bridge, some of the stories were collected and published in a volume

called *Twice-Told Tales*. It is from that volume that *Little Annie's Ramble* is taken. It is pleasant to notice that Longfellow was one of the first to welcome the book, and to give it hearty praise in an article in the *North American Review*. Hawthorne wrote also at this time some short sketches of biography and history, and two of these, *Benjamin West* and *Sir Isaac Newton*, are printed in this volume.

While leading this quiet, uneventful life, he began to keep note-books, in which he recorded what he saw on his walks, what he heard other people say, and thoughts and fancies which came to him through the day and night. He did not make these note-books for publication; they held the rough material out of which he made books and stories, but they had also much that never reappeared in his writings. He jotted down what he said for his own use and pleasure, and thus sometimes he did not make complete sentences. He was like an artist who takes his pencil and draws a few lines, by which to remember something which he sees, and afterwards paints a full and careful picture from such notes. The artist's studies are very interesting to all who like to see how a picture grows, and often the sketch itself is very beautiful, for one who paints well can scarcely help putting beauty into his simplest outlines; then, by drawing constantly, he acquires the power of putting down what he sees in few but vivid lines. After Hawthorne's death, selections from his *Note-Books* were published, and a few pages are given in this book. One may learn by them how to write carefully, just as one may learn to draw by studying an artist's sketches.

These thirteen years meant much to Hawthorne. He

was learning to write; he was steadily using the power which had been given him, and it was growing stronger every year. Yet they were lonely and often discouraging years to him. He could earn but little by his pen. Very few people seemed to care for what he did, and he loved his own work so well that he longed to have others care for it and for him. He went back afterward to the chamber where he had read and written and waited, and as he sat in it again he took out his note-book, and wrote: "If ever I should have a biographer he ought to make great mention of this chamber in my memoirs, because so much of my lonely youth was wasted here, and here my mind and character were formed; and here I have been glad and hopeful, and here I have been despondent. And here I sat a long, long time, waiting patiently for the world to know me, and sometimes wondering why it did not know me sooner, or whether it would ever know me at all, — at least, till I were in my grave. . . . By and by the world found me out in my lonely chamber, and called me forth."

For a short time after this he held a post in the Boston custom-house, given him by the historian George Bancroft, who was then collector of the port. He kept at his writing, also, and prepared the first part of the volume published as *Grandfather's Chair*, in which he told stories to children drawn from early New England history. In 1842 he married Miss Sophia Peabody, and went to live in Concord, Massachusetts. He occupied an old house near the river, which had been the home of the village minister for more than one generation, and was known as the Old Manse. He now gave himself busily to writing, and in 1846 the stories

which he wrote were gathered into two volumes under the title *Mosses from an Old Manse.*

In that same year he was appointed surveyor of the port of Salem, and held the office for three years. It was while living in Salem, among the old familiar scenes, that he wrote the novel which gave him fame, *The Scarlet Letter ;* yet so diffident was he, and so discouraged by the slow sale of the little books he had put forth, that the manuscript of the first draft of the novel lay neglected, until a persistent friend, a publisher, Mr. James T. Fields, discovered it. The publication at once brought Hawthorne noticeably forward. The book was published in 1850, after he had left the custom-house in Salem ; and he took his family at this time to Lenox, in the western part of Massachusetts, where he lived for a little more than a year. He wrote there another of his great novels, *The House of the Seven Gables*, and also his *Wonder-Book*, in which he retold for children some of the old classic legends. One of them, *The Golden Touch*, is printed in this book. Afterwards he wrote *The Tanglewood Tales*, a book of similar stories.

Hawthorne was now a well-known American author, not so much because he had written books which everybody had read, as because the best judges of good books in America and England were eager to read everything he might write, for they saw that a new and great author had arisen. In 1853 his old college friend Franklin Pierce was President, and he appointed Hawthorne consul of the United States in Liverpool, England. Thither he went with his family, and remained in Europe until 1860, although he left the consulate in 1857. The seven years which he spent abroad were

happy ones, and his *Note-Books*, passages from which have been published, give charming accounts of what he saw and did. Two books grew out of his life in Europe: *Our Old Home*, which tells of sights and people in England; and *The Marble Faun*, which is a novel the scene of which is laid in Italy.

Hawthorne wrote other books, which are not named here, and he began one or two which he never finished. Most of his writings are better read by older people than by children, for though he wrote some books expressly for the young, he was most deeply moved by thoughts about life which the young cannot understand. He sometimes made allegories, like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and one of them is given here, *Little Daffydowndilly;* and he always cared for the strange things which happen, just as some people like to walk in the twilight and to listen to mysterious sounds. He was not afraid of the dark, and he thought much of how people felt when they had done wrong or had suffered some great trouble. In the story *The Wives of the Dead*, one can see how well he understood just how a widow might feel, and what would be the ways of people who learned of strange things suddenly.

Hawthorne died May 19, 1864, and was buried on a hill-side in the cemetery at Concord. The day on which he was buried was the one lovely day of a stormy week, and in a poem which Longfellow wrote after the funeral we may catch a glimpse of the beauty of the scene, and know a little of the thoughts of those who were present.

> How beautiful it was, that one bright day
> In the long week of rain!
> Though all its splendor could not chase away
> The omnipresent pain.

> The lovely town was white with apple-blooms,
> And the great elms o'erhead
> Dark shadows wove on their aerial looms
> Shot through with golden thread.

Many famous men and women followed him as he was borne to the grave, and a few of them knew him. Yet very few could say they knew him well. The people who now read his books may know almost as much of him as those who met him daily, for it was in his books that he made himself known. He left a son and two daughters, one of whom has since died.

AMERICAN CLASSICS FOR SCHOOLS.

HAWTHORNE.

LITTLE DAFFYDOWNDILLY.

DAFFYDOWNDILLY was so called because in his nature he resembled a flower, and loved to do only what was beautiful and agreeable, and took no delight in labor of any kind. But, while Daffydowndilly was yet a little boy, his mother sent him away from his pleasant home, and put him under the care of a very strict schoolmaster, who went by the name of Mr. Toil. Those who knew him best affirmed that this Mr. Toil was a very worthy character, and that he had done more good, both to children and grown people, than anybody else in the world. Certainly he had lived long enough to do a great deal of good; for, if all stories be true, he had dwelt upon earth ever since Adam was driven from the garden of Eden.

Nevertheless, Mr. Toil had a severe and ugly countenance, especially for such little boys or big men as were inclined to be idle; his voice, too, was harsh; and all his ways and customs seemed very disagreeable to our friend Daffydowndilly. The whole day long, this ter-

rible old schoolmaster sat at his desk overlooking the scholars, or stalked about the school-room with a certain awful birch rod in his hand. Now came a rap over the shoulders of a boy whom Mr. Toil had caught at play; now he punished a whole class who were behindhand with their lessons; and, in short, unless a lad chose to attend quietly and constantly to his book, he had no chance of enjoying a quiet moment in the school-room of Mr. Toil.

"This will never do for me," thought Daffydowndilly.

Now, the whole of Daffydowndilly's life had hitherto been passed with his dear mother, who had a much sweeter face than old Mr. Toil, and who had always been very indulgent to her little boy. No wonder, therefore, that poor Daffydowndilly found it a woful change, to be sent away from the good lady's side, and put under the care of this ugly-visaged schoolmaster, who never gave him any apples or cakes, and seemed to think that little boys were created only to get lessons.

"I can't bear it any longer," said Daffydowndilly to himself, when he had been at school about a week. "I 'll run away, and try to find my dear mother; and, at any rate, I shall never find anybody half so disagreeable as this old Mr. Toil!"

So, the very next morning, off started poor Daffydowndilly, and began his rambles about the world, with only some bread and cheese for his breakfast, and very little pocket-money to pay his expenses. But he had gone only a short distance when he overtook a man of grave and sedate appearance, who was trudging at a moderate pace along the road.

"The road passed by a field where some haymakers were at work." — Page 15.

"Good-morning, my fine lad," said the stranger; and his voice seemed hard and severe, but yet had a sort of kindness in it; "whence do you come so early, and whither are you going?"

Little Daffydowndilly was a boy of very ingenuous disposition, and had never been known to tell a lie in all his life. Nor did he tell one now. He hesitated a moment or two, but finally confessed that he had run away from school, on account of his great dislike to Mr. Toil; and that he was resolved to find some place in the world where he should never see or hear of the old schoolmaster again.

"O, very well, my little friend!" answered the stranger. "Then we will go together; for I, likewise, have had a good deal to do with Mr. Toil, and should be glad to find some place where he was never heard of."

Our friend Daffydowndilly would have been better pleased with a companion of his own age, with whom he might have gathered flowers along the roadside, or have chased butterflies, or have done many other things to make the journey pleasant. But he had wisdom enough to understand that he should get along through the world much easier by having a man of experience to show him the way. So he accepted the stranger's proposal, and they walked on very sociably together.

They had not gone far, when the road passed by a field where some haymakers were at work, mowing down the tall grass, and spreading it out in the sun to dry. Daffydowndilly was delighted with the sweet smell of the new-mown grass, and thought how much pleasanter it must be to make hay in the sunshine, under the blue sky, and with the birds singing sweetly in the

neighboring trees and bushes, than to be shut up in a dismal school-room, learning lessons all day long, and continually scolded by old Mr. Toil. But, in the midst of these thoughts, while he was stopping to peep over the stone wall, he started back and caught hold of his companion's hand.

"Quick, quick!" cried he. "Let us run away, or he will catch us!"

"Who will catch us?" asked the stranger.

"Mr. Toil, the old schoolmaster!" answered Daffydowndilly. "Don't you see him amongst the haymakers?"

And Daffydowndilly pointed to an elderly man, who seemed to be the owner of the field, and the employer of the men at work there. He had stripped off his coat and waistcoat, and was busily at work in his shirt-sleeves. The drops of sweat stood upon his brow; but he gave himself not a moment's rest, and kept crying out to the haymakers to make hay while the sun shone. Now, strange to say, the figure and features of this old farmer were precisely the same as those of old Mr. Toil, who, at that very moment, must have been just entering his school-room.

"Don't be afraid," said the stranger. "This is not Mr. Toil the schoolmaster, but a brother of his, who was bred a farmer; and people say he is the more disagreeable man of the two. However, he won't trouble you, unless you become a laborer on the farm."

Little Daffydowndilly believed what his companion said, but was very glad, nevertheless, when they were out of sight of the old farmer, who bore such a singular resemblance to Mr. Toil. The two travellers had gone

but little farther, when they came to a spot where some carpenters were erecting a house. Daffydowndilly begged his companion to stop a moment; for it was a very pretty sight to see how neatly the carpenters did their work, with their broad-axes and saws and planes and hammers, shaping out the doors, and putting in the window-sashes, and nailing on the clapboards; and he could not help thinking that he should like to take a broad-axe, a saw, a plane, and a hammer, and build a little house for himself. And then, when he should have a house of his own, old Mr. Toil would never dare to molest him.

But, just while he was delighting himself with this idea, little Daffydowndilly beheld something that made him catch hold of his companion's hand, all in a fright.

"Make haste! Quick, quick!" cried he. "There he is again!"

"Who?" asked the stranger, very quietly.

"Old Mr. Toil," said Daffydowndilly, trembling. "There! he that is overseeing the carpenters. 'T is my old schoolmaster, as sure as I 'm alive!"

The stranger cast his eyes where Daffydowndilly pointed his finger; and he saw an elderly man, with a carpenter's rule and compasses in his hand. This person went to and fro about the unfinished house, measuring pieces of timber, and marking out the work that was to be done, and continually exhorting the other carpenters to be diligent. And wherever he turned his hard and wrinkled visage, the men seemed to feel that they had a task-master over them, and sawed and hammered and planed, as if for dear life.

"O no! this is not Mr. Toil the schoolmaster," said

the stranger. "It is another brother of his, who follows the trade of carpenter."

"I am very glad to hear it," quoth Daffydowndilly; "but if you please, sir, I should like to get out of his way as soon as possible."

Then they went on a little farther, and soon heard the sound of a drum and fife. Daffydowndilly pricked up his ears at this, and besought his companion to hurry forward, that they might not miss seeing the soldiers. Accordingly, they made what haste they could, and soon met a company of soldiers, gayly dressed, with beautiful feathers in their caps and bright muskets on their shoulders. In front marched two drummers and two fifers, beating on their drums and playing on their fifes with might and main, and making such lively music that little Daffydowndilly would gladly have followed them to the end of the world. And if he were only a soldier, then, he said to himself, old Mr. Toil would never venture to look him in the face.

"Quick step! Forward march!" shouted a gruff voice.

Little Daffydowndilly started, in great dismay; for this voice which had spoken to the soldiers sounded precisely the same as that which he had heard every day in Mr. Toil's school-room, out of Mr. Toil's own mouth. And, turning his eyes to the captain of the company, what should he see but the very image of old Mr. Toil himself, with a smart cap and feather on his head, a pair of gold epaulets on his shoulders, a laced coat on his back, a purple sash round his waist, and a long sword, instead of a birch rod, in his hand. And though he held his head so high, and strutted like a

turkey-cock, still he looked quite as ugly and disagreeable as when he was hearing lessons in the schoolroom.

"This is certainly old Mr. Toil," said Daffydowndilly, in a trembling voice. "Let us run away, for fear he should make us enlist in his company!"

"You are mistaken again, my little friend," replied the stranger, very composedly. "This is not Mr. Toil the schoolmaster, but a brother of his, who has served in the army all his life. People say he 's a terribly severe fellow; but you and I need not be afraid of him."

"Well, well," said little Daffydowndilly; "but, if you please, sir, I don't want to see the soldiers any more."

So the child and the stranger resumed their journey; and, by and by, they came to a house by the roadside, where a number of people were making merry. Young men and rosy-cheeked girls, with smiles on their faces, were dancing to the sound of a fiddle. It was the pleasantest sight that Daffydowndilly had yet met with, and it comforted him for all his disappointments.

"O, let us stop here!" cried he to his companion; "for Mr. Toil will never dare to show his face where there is a fiddler, and where people are dancing and making merry. We shall be quite safe here!"

But these last words died away upon Daffydowndilly's tongue; for, happening to cast his eyes on the fiddler, whom should he behold, again, but the likeness of Mr. Toil, holding a fiddle-bow instead of a birch rod, and flourishing it with as much ease and dexterity as if he had been a fiddler all his life! He had somewhat the air of a Frenchman, but still looked exactly like the old

schoolmaster; and Daffydowndilly even fancied that he nodded and winked at him, and made signs for him to join in the dance.

"O dear me!" whispered he, turning pale. "It seems as if there was nobody but Mr. Toil in the world. Who could have thought of his playing on a fiddle!"

"This is not your old schoolmaster," observed the stranger, "but another brother of his, who was bred in France, where he learned the profession of a fiddler. He is ashamed of his family, and generally calls himself Monsieur le Plaisir;[1] but his real name is Toil, and those who have known him best think him still more disagreeable than his brothers."

"Pray let us go a little farther," said Daffydowndilly. "I don't like the looks of this fiddler at all."

Well, thus the stranger and little Daffydowndilly went wandering along the highway, and in shady lanes, and through pleasant villages; and whithersoever they went, behold! there was the image of old Mr. Toil. He stood like a scarecrow in the cornfields. If they entered a house, he sat in the parlor; if they peeped into the kitchen, he was there. He made himself at home in every cottage, and stole, under one disguise or another, into the most splendid mansions. Everywhere there was sure to be somebody wearing the likeness of Mr. Toil, and who, as the stranger affirmed, was one of the old schoolmaster's innumerable brethren.

Little Daffydowndilly was almost tired to death, when he perceived some people reclining lazily in a shady place, by the side of the road. The poor child entreated his companion that they might sit down there, and take some repose.

[1] Mr. Pleasure.

"Old Mr. Toil will never come here," said he; "for he hates to see people taking their ease."

But, even while he spoke, Daffydowndilly's eyes fell upon a person who seemed the laziest and heaviest and most torpid of all those lazy and heavy and torpid people who had lain down to sleep in the shade. Who should it be, again, but the very image of Mr. Toil!

"There is a large family of these Toils," remarked the stranger. "This is another of the old schoolmaster's brothers, who was bred in Italy, where he acquired very idle habits, and goes by the name of Signor Far Niente.[1] He pretends to lead an easy life, but is really the most miserable fellow in the family."

"O, take me back! — take me back!" cried poor little Daffydowndilly, bursting into tears. "If there is nothing but Toil all the world over, I may just as well go back to the school-house!"

"Yonder it is, — there is the school-house!" said the stranger; for though he and little Daffydowndilly had taken a great many steps, they had travelled in a circle, instead of a straight line. "Come; we will go back to school together."

There was something in his companion's voice that little Daffydowndilly now remembered; and it is strange that he had not remembered it sooner. Looking up into his face, behold! there again was the likeness of old Mr. Toil; so that the poor child had been in company with Toil all day, even while he was doing his best to run away from him. Some people, to whom I have told little Daffydowndilly's story, are of opinion that old Mr. Toil was a magician, and possessed the power of multiplying himself into as many shapes as he saw fit.

[1] Mr. Do-Nothing.

Be this as it may, little Daffydowndilly had learned a good lesson, and from that time forward was diligent at his task, because he knew that diligence is not a whit more toilsome than sport or idleness. And when he became better acquainted with Mr. Toil, he began to think that his ways were not so very disagreeable, and that the old schoolmaster's smile of approbation made his face almost as pleasant as even that of Daffydowndilly's mother.

LITTLE ANNIE'S RAMBLE.

DING-DONG! Ding-dong! Ding-dong!

The town crier has rung his bell, at a distant corner, and little Annie stands on her father's doorsteps, trying to hear what the man with the loud voice is talking about. Let me listen too. O, he is telling the people that an elephant, and a lion, and a royal tiger, and a horse with horns, and other strange beasts from foreign countries, have come to town, and will receive all visitors who choose to wait upon them! Perhaps little Annie would like to go. Yes; and I can see that the pretty child is weary of this wide and pleasant street, with the green trees flinging their shade across the quiet sunshine, and the pavements and the sidewalks all as clean as if the housemaid had just swept them with her broom. She feels that impulse to go strolling away — that longing after the mystery of the great world — which many children feel, and which I felt in my childhood. Little Annie shall take a ramble with me. See! I do but hold out my hand, and, like some bright bird in the sunny

air, with her blue silk frock fluttering upwards from her white pantalets, she comes bounding on tiptoe across the street.

Smooth back your brown curls, Annie; and let me tie on your bonnet, and we will set forth! What a strange couple to go on their rambles together! One walks in black attire, with a measured step, and a heavy brow, and his thoughtful eyes bent down, while the gay little girl trips lightly along, as if she were forced to keep hold of my hand, lest her feet should dance away from the earth. Yet there is sympathy between us. If I pride myself on anything, it is because I have a smile that children love; and, on the other hand, there are few grown ladies that could entice me from the side of little Annie; for I delight to let my mind go hand in hand with the mind of a sinless child. So, come, Annie; but if I moralize as we go, do not listen to me; only look about you, and be merry!

Now we turn the corner. Here are hacks with two horses, and stage-coaches with four, thundering to meet each other, and trucks and carts moving at a slower pace, being heavily laden with barrels from the wharves; and here are rattling gigs, which perhaps will be smashed to pieces before our eyes. Hitherward, also, comes a man trundling a wheelbarrow along the pavement. Is not little Annie afraid of such a tumult? No; she does not even shrink closer to my side, but passes on with fearless confidence, a happy child amidst a great throng of grown people, who pay the same reverence to her infancy that they would to extreme old age. Nobody jostles her; all turn aside to make way for little Annie; and, what is most singular, she appears conscious of her

claim to such respect. Now her eyes brighten with pleasure! A street-musician has seated himself on the steps of yonder church, and pours forth his strains to the busy town, a melody that has gone astray among the tramp of footsteps, the buzz of voices, and the war of passing wheels. Who heeds the poor organ-grinder? None but myself and little Annie, whose feet begin to move in unison with the lively tune, as if she were loath that music should be wasted without a dance. But where would Annie find a partner? Some have the gout in their toes, or the rheumatism in their joints; some are stiff with age, some feeble with disease; some are so lean that their bones would rattle, and others of such ponderous size that their agility would crack the flagstones; but many, many have leaden feet, because their hearts are far heavier than lead. It is a sad thought that I have chanced upon. What a company of dancers should we be! For I, too, am a gentleman of sober footsteps, and therefore, little Annie, let us walk sedately on.

It is a question with me whether this giddy child, or my sage self, have most pleasure in looking at the shop-windows. We love the silks of sunny hue, that glow within the darkened premises of the spruce dry-goods' men; we are pleasantly dazzled by the burnished silver and the chased gold, the rings of wedlock and the costly love-ornaments, glistening at the window of the jeweller; but Annie, more than I, seeks for a glimpse of her passing figure in the dusty looking-glasses at the hardware stores. All that is bright and gay attracts us both.

Here is a shop to which the recollections of my boyhood, as well as present partialities, give a peculiar

magic. How delightful to let the fancy revel on the dainties of a confectioner; those pies, with such white and flaky paste, their contents being a mystery, whether rich mince, with whole plums intermixed, or piquant apple, delicately rose-flavored; those cakes, heart-shaped or round, piled in a lofty pyramid; those sweet little circlets, sweetly named kisses; those dark, majestic masses, fit to be bridal-loaves at the wedding of an heiress, mountains in size, their summits deeply snow-covered with sugar! Then the mighty treasures of sugar-plums, white and crimson and yellow, in large glass vases; and candy of all varieties; and those little cockles, or whatever they are called, much prized by children for their sweetness, and more, for the mottoes which they inclose, by love-sick maids and bachelors! O, my mouth waters, little Annie, and so doth yours; but we will not be tempted, except to an imaginary feast; so let us hasten onward, devouring the vision of a plum-cake.

Here are pleasures, as some people would say, of a more exalted kind, in the window of a bookseller. Is Annie a literary lady? Yes; she is deeply read in Peter Parley's tomes, and has an increasing love for fairy-tales, though seldom met with nowadays, and she will subscribe, next year, to the *Juvenile Miscellany*.[1] But, truth to tell, she is apt to turn away from the printed page, and keep gazing at the pretty pictures, such as the gay-colored ones which make this shop-window the continual loitering-place of children. What would Annie think, if, in the book which I mean to send

[1] The name of a magazine published when this story was first printed.

her on New Year's Day, she should find her sweet little self, bound up in silk or morocco with gilt edges, there to remain till she become a woman grown, with children of her own to read about their mother's childhood! That would be very queer.

Little Annie is weary of pictures, and pulls me onward by the hand, till suddenly we pause at the most wondrous shop in all the town. O, my stars! Is this a toy-shop, or is it fairy-land? For here are gilded chariots, in which the king and queen of the fairies might ride side by side, while their courtiers, on these small horses, should gallop in triumphal procession before and behind the royal pair. Here, too, are dishes of china-ware, fit to be the dining set of those same princely personages, when they make a regal banquet in the stateliest hall of their palace, full five feet high, and behold their nobles feasting adown the long perspective of the table. Betwixt the king and queen should sit my little Annie, the prettiest fairy of them all. Here stands a turbaned Turk, threatening us with his sabre, like an ugly heathen as he is. And next a Chinese mandarin, who nods his head at Annie and myself. Here we may review a whole army of horse and foot, in red and blue uniforms, with drums, fifes, trumpets, and all kinds of noiseless music; they have halted on the shelf of this window, after their weary march from Lilliput. But what cares Annie for soldiers? No conquering queen is she, neither a Semiramis[1] nor a Catharine;[2] her whole

[1] A famous queen of the East, thought by some to have been living in the time of Tiglath-Pileser, mentioned in the Bible.

[2] There were several Queen Catharines, but perhaps the most famous was the wife of Henry VIII., King of England.

heart is set upon that doll, who gazes at us with such a fashionable stare. This is the little girl's true plaything. Though made of wood, a doll is a visionary and ethereal personage, endowed by childish fancy with a peculiar life; the mimic lady is a heroine of romance, an actor and a sufferer in a thousand shadowy scenes, the chief inhabitant of that wild world with which children ape the real one. Little Annie does not understand what I am saying, but looks wishfully at the proud lady in the window. We will invite her home with us as we return. Meantime, good-by, Dame Doll! A toy yourself, you look forth from your window upon many ladies that are also toys, though they walk and speak, and upon a crowd in pursuit of toys, though they wear grave visages. O, with your never-closing eyes, had you but an intellect to moralize on all that flits before them, what a wise doll would you be! Come, little Annie, we shall find toys enough, go where we may.

Now we elbow our way among the throng again. It is curious, in the most crowded part of a town, to meet with living creatures that had their birthplace in some far solitude, but have acquired a second nature in the wilderness of men. Look up, Annie, at that canary-bird, hanging out of the window in his cage. Poor little fellow! His golden feathers are all tarnished in this smoky sunshine; he would have glistened twice as brightly among the summer islands; but still he has become a citizen in all his tastes and habits, and would not sing half so well without the uproar that drowns his music. What a pity that he does not know how miserable he is! There is a parrot, too, calling out, "Pretty Poll! Pretty Poll!" as we pass by. Foolish bird, to be talk-

ing about her prettiness to strangers, especially as she is not a pretty Poll, though gaudily dressed in green and yellow. If she had said, "Pretty Annie," there would have been some sense in it. See that gray squirrel at the door of the fruit-shop, whirling round and round so merrily within his wire wheel! Being condemned to the tread-mill, he makes it an amusement. Admirable philosophy!

Here comes a big, rough dog, a countryman's dog in search of his master; smelling at everybody's heels, and touching little Annie's hand with his cold nose, but hurrying away, though she would fain have patted him. Success to your search, Fidelity! And there sits a great yellow cat upon a window-sill, a very corpulent and comfortable cat, gazing at this transitory world with owl's eyes, and making pithy comments, doubtless, or what appear such to the silly beast. O sage puss, make room for me beside you, and we will be a pair of philosophers!

Here we see something to remind us of the town crier, and his ding-dong bell! Look! look at that great cloth spread out in the air, pictured all over with wild beasts, as if they had met together to choose a king, according to their custom in the days of Æsop. But they are choosing neither a king nor a president; else we should hear a most horrible snarling! They have come from the deep woods, and the wild mountains, and the desert sands, and the polar snows, only to do homage to my little Annie. As we enter among them, the great elephant makes us a bow, in the best style of elephantine courtesy, bending lowly down his mountain bulk, with trunk abased, and leg thrust out behind. Annie returns

the salute, much to the gratification of the elephant, who is certainly the best-bred monster in the caravan. The lion and the lioness are busy with two beef bones. The royal tiger, the beautiful, the untamable, keeps pacing his narrow cage with a haughty step, unmindful of the spectators, or recalling the fierce deeds of his former life, when he was wont to leap forth upon such inferior animals, from the jungles of Bengal.

Here we see the very same wolf, — do not go near him, Annie! — the self-same wolf that devoured little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother. In the next cage, a hyena from Egypt, who has doubtless howled around the pyramids, and a black bear from our own forests are fellow-prisoners, and most excellent friends. Are there any two living creatures who have so few sympathies that they cannot possibly be friends? Here sits a great white bear, whom common observers would call a very stupid beast, though I perceive him to be only absorbed in contemplation: he is thinking of his voyages on an iceberg, and of his comfortable home in the vicinity of the north pole, and of the little cubs whom he left rolling in the eternal snows. In fact, he is a bear of sentiment. But, O, those unsentimental monkeys! the ugly, grinning, aping, chattering, ill-natured, mischievous, and queer little brutes. Annie does not love the monkeys. Their ugliness shocks her pure, instinctive delicacy of taste, and makes her mind unquiet, because it bears a wild and dark resemblance to humanity. But here is a little pony, just big enough for Annie to ride, and round and round he gallops in a circle, keeping time with his trampling hoofs to a band of music. And here, — with a laced coat and a cocked hat, and a riding-

"Stop, stop, town crier! the lost is found."— Page 31.

lic ear. Will he tell us of an auction, or of a lost pocket-book, or a show of beautiful wax figures, or of some monstrous beast more horrible than any in the caravan? I guess the latter. See how he uplifts the bell in his right hand, and shakes it slowly at first, then with a hurried motion, till the clapper seems to strike both sides at once, and the sounds are scattered forth in quick succession, far and near.

Ding-dong! Ding-dong! Ding-dong!

Now he raises his clear, loud voice, above all the din of the town; it drowns the buzzing talk of many tongues, and draws each man's mind from his own business; it rolls up and down the echoing street, and ascends to the hushed chamber of the sick, and penetrates downward to the cellar kitchen, where the hot cook turns from the fire to listen. Who, of all that address the public ear, whether in church, or court-house, or hall of state, has such an attentive audience as the town crier? What saith the people's orator?

"Strayed from her home, a LITTLE GIRL, of five years old, in a blue silk frock and white pantalets, with brown curling hair and hazel eyes. Whoever will bring her back to her afflicted mother" —

Stop, stop, town crier! The lost is found. O, my pretty Annie, we forgot to tell your mother of our ramble, and she is in despair, and has sent the town crier to bellow up and down the streets, affrighting old and young, for the loss of a little girl who has not once

an auction sale, or lost property, or it may be a lost child; but in large towns and cities now the newspapers and handbills give out notices, and when anything is lost people go to the police, or advertise in the papers.

let go my hand! Well, let us hasten homeward; and, as we go, forget not to thank Heaven, my Annie, that, after wandering a little way into the world, you may return at the first summons, with an untainted and unwearied heart, and be a happy child again. But I have gone too far astray for the town crier to call me back.

Sweet has been the charm of childhood on my spirit, throughout my ramble with little Annie! Say not that it has been a waste of precious moments, an idle matter, a babble of childish talk, and a reverie of childish imaginations, about topics unworthy of a grown man's notice. Has it been merely this? Not so; not so. They are not truly wise who would affirm it. As the pure breath of children revives the life of aged men, so is our moral nature revived by their free and simple thoughts, their native feeling, their airy mirth, for little cause or none, their grief, soon roused and soon allayed. Their influence on us is at least reciprocal with ours on them. When our infancy is almost forgotten, and our boyhood long departed, though it seems but as yesterday; when life settles darkly down upon us, and we doubt whether to call ourselves young any more, then it is good to steal away from the society of bearded men, and even of gentler woman, and spend an hour or two with children. After drinking from those fountains of still fresh existence, we shall return into the crowd, as I do now, to struggle onward and do our part in life, perhaps as fervently as ever, but, for a time, with a kinder and purer heart, and a spirit more lightly wise. All this by thy sweet magic, dear little Annie!

BENJAMIN WEST.

[Born 1738. Died 1820.]

In the year 1738 there came into the world, in the town of Springfield,[1] Pennsylvania, a Quaker infant, from whom his parents and neighbors looked for wonderful things. A famous preacher of the Society of Friends[2] had prophesied about little Ben, and foretold that he would be one of the most remarkable characters that had appeared on the earth since the days of William Penn. On this account the eyes of many people were fixed upon the boy. Some of his ancestors[3] had won great renown in the old wars of England and France; but it was probably expected that Ben would become a preacher, and would convert multitudes to the peaceful doctrines of the Quakers. Friend West and his wife were thought to be very fortunate in having such a son.

Little Ben lived to the ripe age of six years without

[1] This Springfield is not the town of that name in Bradford County, in the northern part of Pennsylvania, but a place near Chester, in the vicinity of Philadelphia, which was named Springfield by Thomas Pearson, Benjamin West's maternal grandfather, who was a confidential friend of William Penn, and came over with Penn at the close of the seventeenth century.

[2] The Religious Society of Friends was the title which the Friends gave themselves, but they were commonly called Quakers. The society was founded under the preaching of George Fox, 1648–1690. The famous preacher was Peckover; it was while he was preaching in Springfield that Benjamin West was born.

[3] The branch of the West family to which Benjamin belonged has been traced to Lord Delawarre, who distinguished himself at the battle of Cressy, fought between the English and French, August 26, 1346.

doing anything that was worthy to be told in history. But one summer afternoon, in his seventh year, his mother put a fan into his hand, and bade him keep the flies away from the face of a little babe who lay fast asleep in the cradle. She then left the room.

The boy waved the fan to and fro and drove away the buzzing flies whenever they had the impertinence to come near the baby's face. When they had all flown out of the window or into distant parts of the room, he bent over the cradle, and delighted himself with gazing at the sleeping infant. It was, indeed, a very pretty sight. The little personage in the cradle slumbered peacefully, with its waxen hands under its chin, looking as full of blissful quiet as if angels were singing lullabies in its ear. Indeed, it must have been dreaming about heaven; for, while Ben stooped over the cradle, the little baby smiled.

"How beautiful she looks!" said Ben to himself. "What a pity it is that such a pretty smile should not last forever!"

Now Ben, at this period of his life, had never heard of that wonderful art by which a look, that appears and vanishes in a moment, may be made to last for hundreds of years. But, though nobody had told him of such an art, he may be said to have invented it for himself. On a table near at hand there were pens and paper, and ink of two colors, black and red. The boy seized a pen and sheet of paper, and, kneeling down beside the cradle, began to draw a likeness of the infant. While he was busied in this manner he heard his mother's step approaching, and hastily tried to conceal the paper.

"Benjamin, my son, what hast thou[1] been doing?" inquired his mother, observing marks of confusion in his face.

At first Ben was unwilling to tell; for he felt as if there might be something wrong in stealing the baby's face and putting it upon a sheet of paper. However, as his mother insisted, he finally put the sketch into her hand, and then hung his head, expecting to be well scolded. But when the good lady saw what was on the paper, in lines of red and black ink, she uttered a scream of surprise and joy.

"Bless me!" cried she. "It is a picture of little Sally!"

And then she threw her arms round our friend Benjamin, and kissed him so tenderly that he never afterwards was afraid to show his performances to his mother.

As Ben grew older, he was observed to take vast delight in looking at the hues and forms of nature. For instance, he was greatly pleased with the blue violets of spring, the wild roses of summer, and the scarlet cardinal-flowers of early autumn. In the decline of the year, when the woods were variegated with all the colors of the rainbow, Ben seemed to desire nothing better than to gaze at them from morn till night. The purple and golden clouds of sunset were a joy to him. And he was continually endeavoring to draw the figures of trees, men, mountains, houses, cattle, geese, ducks, and turkeys, with a piece of chalk, on barn doors or on the floor.

[1] The Quakers in speaking to people use *thou* and *thee* where others use *you*.

In these old times the Mohawk Indians were still numerous in Pennsylvania. Every year a party of them used to pay a visit to Springfield, because the wigwams of their ancestors had formerly stood there. These wild men grew fond of little Ben, and made him very happy by giving him some of the red and yellow paint with which they were accustomed to adorn their faces. His mother, too, presented him with a piece of indigo. Thus he now had three colors, — red, blue, and yellow, — and could manufacture green by mixing the yellow with the blue. Our friend Ben was overjoyed, and doubtless showed his gratitude to the Indians by taking their likenesses in the strange dresses which they wore, with feathers, tomahawks, and bows and arrows.

But all this time the young artist had no paint-brushes; nor were there any to be bought, unless he had sent to Philadelphia on purpose. However, he was a very ingenious boy, and resolved to manufacture paint-brushes for himself. With this design he laid hold upon — what do you think? Why, upon a respectable old black cat, who was sleeping quietly by the fireside.

"Puss," said little Ben to the cat, "pray give me some of the fur from the tip of thy tail?"

Though he addressed the black cat so civilly, yet Ben was determined to have the fur whether she were willing or not. Puss, who had no great zeal for the fine arts, would have resisted if she could; but the boy was armed with his mother's scissors, and very dexterously clipped off fur enough to make a paint-brush. This was of so much use to him that he applied to Madam Puss again and again, until her warm coat of fur had become so thin and ragged that she could hardly keep comfortable

through the winter. Poor thing! she was forced to creep close into the chimney-corner, and eyed Ben with a very rueful physiognomy. But Ben considered it more necessary that he should have paint-brushes than that puss should be warm.

About this period Friend West received a visit from Mr. Pennington, a merchant of Philadelphia, who was likewise a member of the Society of Friends. The visitor, on entering the parlor, was surprised to see it ornamented with drawings of Indian chiefs, and of birds with beautiful plumage, and of the wild flowers of the forest. Nothing of the kind was ever seen before in the habitation of a Quaker farmer.

"Why, Friend West," exclaimed the Philadelphia merchant, "what has possessed thee to cover thy walls with all these pictures? Where on earth didst thou get them?"

Then Friend West explained that all these pictures were painted by little Ben, with no better materials than red and yellow ochre and a piece of indigo, and with brushes made of the black cat's fur.

"Verily," said Mr. Pennington, "the boy hath a wonderful faculty. Some of our friends might look upon these matters as vanity; but little Benjamin appears to have been born a painter; and Providence is wiser than we are."

The good merchant patted Benjamin on the head, and evidently considered him a wonderful boy. When his parents saw how much their son's performances were admired, they no doubt remembered the prophecy of the old Quaker preacher respecting Ben's future eminence. Yet they could not understand how he was ever

to become a very great and useful man merely by making pictures.

One evening, shortly after Mr. Pennington's return to Philadelphia, a package arrived at Springfield, directed to our little friend Ben.

"What can it possibly be?" thought Ben, when it was put into his hands. "Who can have sent me such a great square package as this?"

On taking off the thick brown paper which enveloped it, behold! there was a paint-box, with a great many cakes of paint, and brushes of various sizes. It was the gift of good Mr. Pennington. There were likewise several squares of canvas such as artists use for painting pictures upon, and, in addition to all these treasures, some beautiful engravings of landscapes. These were the first pictures that Ben had ever seen, except those of his own drawing.

What a joyful evening was this for the little artist! At bedtime he put the paint-box under his pillow, and got hardly a wink of sleep; for, all night long, his fancy was painting pictures in the darkness. In the morning he hurried to the garret, and was seen no more till the dinner-hour; nor did he give himself time to eat more than a mouthful or two of food before he hurried back to the garret again. The next day, and the next, he was just as busy as ever; until at last his mother thought it time to ascertain what he was about. She accordingly followed him to the garret.

On opening the door, the first object that presented itself to her eyes was our friend Benjamin, giving the last touches to a beautiful picture. He had copied portions of two of the engravings, and made one picture

out of both, with such admirable skill that it was far more beautiful than the originals. The grass, the trees, the water, the sky, and the houses were all painted in their proper colors. There, too, were the sunshine and the shadow, looking as natural as life.

"My dear child, thou hast done wonders!" cried his mother.

The good lady was in an ecstasy of delight. And well might she be proud of her boy; for there were touches in this picture which old artists, who had spent a lifetime in the business, need not have been ashamed of. Many a year afterwards, this wonderful production was exhibited at the Royal Academy[1] in London.

When Benjamin was quite a large lad he was sent to school at Philadelphia. Not long after his arrival he had a slight attack of fever, which confined him to his bed. The light, which would otherwise have disturbed him, was excluded from his chamber by means of closed wooden shutters. At first it appeared so totally dark that Ben could not distinguish any object in the room. By degrees, however, his eyes became accustomed to the scanty light.

He was lying on his back, looking up towards the ceiling, when suddenly he beheld the dim apparition of a white cow moving slowly over his head! Ben started, and rubbed his eyes in the greatest amazement.

"What can this mean?" thought he.

The white cow disappeared; and next came several pigs, which trotted along the ceiling and vanished into the darkness of the chamber. So lifelike did these

[1] The Royal Academy has a school where painting is taught, and a gallery where pictures are exhibited.

grunters look that Ben almost seemed to hear them squeak.

"Well, this is very strange!" said Ben to himself.

When the people of the house came to see him, Benjamin told them of the marvellous circumstance which had occurred. But they would not believe him.

"Benjamin, thou art surely out of thy senses!" cried they. "How is it possible that a white cow and a litter of pigs should be visible on the ceiling of a dark chamber?"

Ben, however, had great confidence in his own eyesight, and was determined to search the mystery to the bottom. For this purpose, when he was again left alone, he got out of bed and examined the window-shutters. He soon perceived a small chink in one of them, through which a ray of light found its passage and rested upon the ceiling. Now, the science of optics will inform us that the pictures of the white cow and the pigs, and of other objects out-of-doors, came into the dark chamber through this narrow chink, and were painted over Benjamin's head. It is greatly to his credit that he discovered the scientific principle of this phenomenon, and by means of it constructed a camera-obscura, or magic-lantern, out of a hollow box. This was of great advantage to him in drawing landscapes.

Well, time went on, and Benjamin continued to draw and paint pictures until he had now reached the age when it was proper that he should choose a business for life. His father and mother were in considerable perplexity about him. According to the ideas of the Quakers, it is not right for people to spend their lives in occupations that are of no real and sensible advantage to

the world. Now, what advantage could the world expect from Benjamin's pictures? This was a difficult question; and, in order to set their minds at rest, his parents determined to consult the preachers and wise men of their society. Accordingly, they all assembled in the meeting-house, and discussed the matter from beginning to end.

Finally they came to a very wise decision. It seemed so evident that Providence had created Benjamin to be a painter, and had given him abilities which would be thrown away in any other business, that the Quakers resolved not to oppose his inclination. They even acknowledged that the sight of a beautiful picture might convey instruction to the mind, and might benefit the heart as much as a good book or a wise discourse. They therefore committed the youth to the direction of God, being well assured that He best knew what was his proper sphere of usefulness. The old men laid their hands upon Benjamin's head and gave him their blessing, and the women kissed him affectionately. All consented that he should go forth into the world and learn to be a painter by studying the best pictures of ancient and modern times.

So our friend Benjamin left the dwelling of his parents, and his native woods and streams, and the good Quakers of Springfield, and the Indians who had given him his first colors; he left all the places and persons whom he had hitherto known, and returned to them no more. He went first to Philadelphia, and afterwards to Europe. Here he was noticed by many great people, but retained all the sobriety and simplicity which he had learned among the Quakers. It is related of him that, when he

was presented at the court of the Prince of Parma,[1] he kept his hat upon his head,[2] even while kissing the Prince's hand.

When he was twenty-five years old he went to London and established himself there as an artist. In due course of time he acquired great fame by his pictures, and was made chief painter to King George III. and President of the Royal Academy of Arts. When the Quakers of Pennsylvania heard of his success, they felt that the prophecy of the old preacher as to little Ben's future eminence was now accomplished. It is true, they shook their heads at his pictures of battle and bloodshed, such as the "Death of Wolfe,"[3] thinking that these terrible scenes should not be held up to the admiration of the world.

But they approved of the great paintings in which he represented the miracles and sufferings of the Redeemer of mankind. King George employed him to adorn a large and beautiful chapel at Windsor Castle with pictures of these sacred subjects. He likewise painted a magnificent picture of "Christ Healing the Sick," which he gave to the hospital at Philadelphia. It was exhib-

[1] The Duchy of Parma, now a part of the kingdom of Italy, was in 1760, when West visited it, ruled over by the Infante Don Philip, son of the King of Spain.

[2] It was a Quaker custom to keep the head covered before people of all ranks, as a sign that men were really equal in the sight of God. At the time when the Quaker sect arose, the rich and proud exacted a great deal of respect from the poor and lowly.

[3] Upon the plains of Abraham before Quebec, where Wolfe fell in the battle which resulted in the English conquest of Canada from the French.

ited to the public, and produced so much profit that the hospital was enlarged so as to accommodate thirty more patients. If Benjamin West had done no other good deed than this, yet it would have been enough to entitle him to an honorable remembrance forever. At this very day there are thirty poor people in the hospital who owe all their comforts to that same picture.

We shall mention only a single incident more. The picture of "Christ Healing the Sick" was exhibited at the Royal Academy in London, where it covered a vast space and displayed a multitude of figures as large as life. On the wall, close beside this admirable picture, hung a small and faded landscape. It was the same that little Ben had painted in his father's garret, after receiving the paint-box and engravings from good Mr. Pennington.

He lived many years in peace and honor, and died in 1820, at the age of eighty-two. The story of his life is almost as wonderful as a fairy tale; for there are few stranger transformations than that of a little unknown Quaker boy, in the wilds of America, into the most distinguished English painter of his day. Let us each make the best use of our natural abilities as Benjamin West did; and, with the blessing of Providence, we shall arrive at some good end. As for fame, it is but little matter whether we acquire it or not.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

[Born 1642. Died 1727.]

On Christmas Day, in the year 1642, Isaac Newton was born at the small village of Woolsthorpe, in England. Little did his mother think, when she beheld her new-born babe, that he was destined to explain many matters which had been a mystery ever since the creation of the world.

Isaac's father being dead, Mrs. Newton was married again to a clergyman, and went to reside at North Witham.[1] Her son was left to the care of his good old grandmother, who was very kind to him and sent him to school. In his early years Isaac did not appear to be a very bright scholar, but was chiefly remarkable for his ingenuity in all mechanical occupations. He had a set of little tools and saws of various sizes manufactured by himself. With the aid of these Isaac contrived to make many curious articles, at which he worked with so much skill that he seemed to have been born with a saw or chisel in hand.

The neighbors looked with vast admiration at the things which Isaac manufactured. And his old grandmother, I suppose, was never weary of talking about him.

"He 'll make a capital workman one of these days," she would probably say. "No fear but what Isaac will do well in the world and be a rich man before he dies."

It is amusing to conjecture what were the anticipations of his grandmother and the neighbors about Isaac's

[1] A neighboring village.

"Sir Isaac Newton and the Apple" — Page 44.

future life. Some of them, perhaps, fancied that he would make beautiful furniture of mahogany, rosewood, or polished oak, inlaid with ivory and ebony, and magnificently gilded. And then, doubtless, all the rich people would purchase these fine things to adorn their drawing-rooms. Others probably thought that little Isaac was destined to be an architect, and would build splendid mansions for the nobility and gentry, and churches too, with the tallest steeples that had ever been seen in England.

Some of his friends, no doubt, advised Isaac's grandmother to apprentice him to a clock-maker; for, besides his mechanical skill, the boy seemed to have a taste for mathematics, which would be very useful to him in that profession. And then, in due time, Isaac would set up for himself, and would manufacture curious clocks, like those that contain sets of dancing figures, which issue from the dial-plate when the hour is struck; or like those where a ship sails across the face of the clock, and is seen tossing up and down on the waves as often as the pendulum vibrates.

Indeed, there was some ground for supposing that Isaac would devote himself to the manufacture of clocks, since he had already made one, of a kind which nobody had ever heard of before. It was set a-going, not by wheels and weights like other clocks, but by the dropping of water. This was an object of great wonderment to all the people round about; and it must be confessed that there are few boys, or men either, who could contrive to tell what o'clock it is by means of a bowl of water.

Besides the water-clock, Isaac made a sun-dial. Thus

his grandmother was never at a loss to know the hour: for the water-clock would tell it in the shade, and the dial in the sunshine. The sun-dial is said to be still in existence at Woolsthorpe, on the corner of the house where Isaac dwelt. If so, it must have marked the passage of every sunny hour that has elapsed since Isaac Newton was a boy. It marked all the famous moments of his life; it marked the hour of his death; and still the sunshine creeps slowly over it, as regularly as when Isaac first set it up.

Yet we must not say that the sun-dial has lasted longer than its maker; for Isaac Newton will exist long after the dial — yea, and long after the sun itself — shall have crumbled to decay.

Isaac possessed a wonderful faculty of acquiring knowledge by the simplest means. For instance, what method do you suppose he took to find out the strength of the wind? You will never guess how the boy could compel that unseen, inconstant, and ungovernable wonder, the wind, to tell him the measure of its strength. Yet nothing can be more simple. He jumped against the wind; and by the length of his jump he could calculate the force of a gentle breeze, a brisk gale, or a tempest. Thus, even in his boyish sports, he was continually searching out the secrets of philosophy.

Not far from his grandmother's residence there was a windmill which operated on a new plan. Isaac was in the habit of going thither frequently, and would spend whole hours in examining its various parts. While the mill was at rest he pried into its internal machinery. When its broad sails were set in motion by the wind, he watched the process by which the mill-stones were

made to revolve and crush the grain that was put into the hopper. After gaining a thorough knowledge of its construction he was observed to be unusually busy with his tools.

It was not long before his grandmother and all the neighborhood knew what Isaac had been about. He had constructed a model of the windmill. Though not so large, I suppose, as one of the box-traps which boys set to catch squirrels, yet every part of the mill and its machinery was complete. Its little sails were neatly made of linen, and whirled round very swiftly when the mill was placed in a draught of air. Even a puff of wind from Isaac's mouth or from a pair of bellows was sufficient to set the sails in motion. And, what was most curious, if a handful of grains of wheat were put into the little hopper, they would soon be converted into snow-white flour.

Isaac's playmates were enchanted with his new windmill. They thought that nothing so pretty and so wonderful had ever been seen in the whole world.

"But, Isaac," said one of them, "you have forgotten one thing that belongs to a mill."

"What is that?" asked Isaac; for he supposed that, from the roof of the mill to its foundation, he had forgotten nothing.

"Why, where is the miller?" said his friend.

"That is true, — I must look out for one," said Isaac; and he set himself to consider how the deficiency should be supplied.

He might easily have made the miniature figure of a man; but then it would not have been able to move about and perform the duties of a miller. As Captain

Lemuel Gulliver had not yet discovered the island of Lilliput,[1] Isaac did not know that there were little men in the world whose size was just suited to his windmill. It so happened, however, that a mouse had just been caught in the trap; and, as no other miller could be found, Mr. Mouse was appointed to that important office. The new miller made a very respectable appearance in his dark-gray coat. To be sure, he had not a very good character for honesty, and was suspected of sometimes stealing a portion of the grain which was given him to grind. But perhaps some two-legged millers are quite as dishonest as this small quadruped.

As Isaac grew older, it was found that he had far more important matters in his mind than the manufacture of toys like the little windmill. All day long, if left to himself, he was either absorbed in thought or engaged in some book of mathematics or natural philosophy. At night, I think it probable, he looked up with reverential curiosity to the stars, and wondered whether they were worlds like our own, and how great was their distance from the earth, and what was the power that kept them in their courses. Perhaps, even so early in life, Isaac Newton felt a presentiment that he should be able, hereafter, to answer all these questions.

When Isaac was fourteen years old, his mother's second husband being now dead, she wished her son to leave school and assist her in managing the farm at Woolsthorpe. For a year or two, therefore, he tried to turn

[1] Jonathan Swift, an English writer, born when Newton was twenty-five years old, wrote *Gulliver's Travels*, which included a *Voyage to Lilliput*, an imaginary island inhabited by miniature people.

his attention to farming. But his mind was so bent on becoming a scholar that his mother sent him back to school, and afterwards to the University of Cambridge.

I have now finished my anecdotes of Isaac Newton's boyhood. My story would be far too long were I to mention all the splendid discoveries which he made after he came to be a man. He was the first that found out the nature of light; for, before his day, nobody could tell what the sunshine was composed of. You remember, I suppose, the story of an apple's falling on his head,[1] and thus leading him to discover the force of gravitation, which keeps the heavenly bodies in their courses. When he had once got hold of this idea, he never permitted his mind to rest until he had searched out all the laws by which the planets are guided through the sky. This he did as thoroughly as if he had gone up among the stars and tracked them in their orbits. The boy had found out the mechanism of a windmill; the man explained to his fellow-men the mechanism of the universe.

While making these researches he was accustomed to

[1] The story was told by Catharine Barton, Newton's niece, to the French philosopher Voltaire, and recited that Newton was sitting in his garden at Woolsthorpe when the apple fell; he began to think that as the same power by which the apple fell to the ground was not any less apparently at the greatest distance from the centre of the earth which we can reach, not at the top of a spire nor on a high mountain, it might extend to the moon, and retain her in her orbit, in the same manner as it bends into a curve a stone, or a cannon-ball when sent in a straight line from the surface of the earth. Then if the moon was thus kept in her orbit by gravitation to the earth, or in other words, by its attraction, it was equally probable, he thought, that the planets were kept in their orbits by gravitation toward the sun.

spend night after night in a lofty tower, gazing at the heavenly bodies through a telescope. His mind was lifted far above the things of this world. He may be said, indeed, to have spent the greater part of his life in worlds that lie thousands and millions of miles away; for where the thoughts and the heart are, there is our true existence.

Did you never hear the story of Newton and his little dog Diamond? One day, when he was fifty years old, and had been hard at work more than twenty years studying the theory of light, he went out of his chamber, leaving his little dog asleep before the fire. On the table lay a heap of manuscript papers, containing all the discoveries which Newton had made during those twenty years. When his master was gone, up rose little Diamond, jumped upon the table, and overthrew the lighted candle. The papers immediately caught fire.

Just as the destruction was completed, Newton opened the chamber door, and perceived that the labors of twenty years were reduced to a heap of ashes. There stood little Diamond, the author of all the mischief. Almost any other man would have sentenced the dog to immediate death. But Newton patted him on the head with his usual kindness, although grief was at his heart.

"O Diamond, Diamond," exclaimed he, "thou little knowest the mischief thou hast done!"

This incident affected his health and spirits for some time afterwards; but, from his conduct towards the little dog, you may judge what was the sweetness of his temper.

Newton lived to be a very old man, and acquired great renown, and was made a member of Parliament,

and received the honor of knighthood from the king. But he cared little for earthly fame and honors, and felt no pride in the vastness of his knowledge. All that he had learned only made him feel how little he knew in comparison to what remained to be known.

"I seem to myself like a child," observed he, "playing on the sea-shore, and picking up here and there a curious shell or a pretty pebble, while the boundless ocean of Truth lies undiscovered before me."

At last, in 1727, when he was fourscore and five years old, Sir Isaac Newton died, — or rather, he ceased to live on earth. We may be permitted to believe that he is still searching out the infinite wisdom and goodness of the Creator as earnestly, and with even more success, than while his spirit animated a mortal body. He has left a fame behind him which will be as endurable as if his name were written in letters of light formed by the stars upon the midnight sky.

THE GOLDEN TOUCH.

ONCE upon a time, there lived a very rich man, and a king besides, whose name was Midas; and he had a little daughter, whom nobody but myself ever heard of, and whose name I either never knew, or have entirely forgotten. So, because I love odd names for little girls, I choose to call her Marygold.

This King Midas was fonder of gold than of anything else in the world. He valued his royal crown chiefly because it was composed of that precious metal. If he loved anything better, or half so well, it was the one little maiden who played so merrily around her father's footstool. But the more Midas loved his daughter, the more did he desire and seek for wealth. He thought, foolish man! that the best thing he could possibly do for this dear child would be to bequeath her the immensest pile of yellow, glistening coin, that had ever been heaped together since the world was made. Thus, he gave all his thoughts and all his time to this one purpose. If ever he happened to gaze for an instant at the gold-tinted clouds of sunset, he wished that they were real gold, and that they could be squeezed safely into his strong box. When little Marygold ran to meet him, with a bunch of buttercups and dandelions, he used to say, "Poh, poh, child! If these flowers were as golden as they look, they would be worth the plucking!"

And yet, in his earlier days, before he was so entirely possessed of this insane desire for riches, King Midas had shown a great taste for flowers. He had planted

a garden, in which grew the biggest and beautifullest and sweetest roses that any mortal ever saw or smelt. These roses were still growing in the garden, as large, as lovely, and as fragrant, as when Midas used to pass whole hours in gazing at them, and inhaling their perfume. But now, if he looked at them at all, it was only to calculate how much the garden would be worth, if each of the innumerable rose-petals were a thin plate of gold. And though he once was fond of music (in spite of an idle story about his ears, which were said to resemble those of an ass [1]), the only music for poor Midas, now, was the chink of one coin against another.

At length (as people always grow more and more foolish, unless they take care to grow wiser and wiser), Midas had got to be so exceedingly unreasonable, that he could scarcely bear to see or touch any object that was not gold. He made it his custom, therefore, to pass a large portion of every day in a dark and dreary apartment, under ground, at the basement of his palace. It was here that he kept his wealth. To this dismal hole — for it was little better than a dungeon — Midas betook himself, whenever he wanted to be particularly happy. Here, after carefully locking the door, he would take a bag of gold coin, or a gold cup as big as a wash-bowl, or a heavy golden bar, or a peck-measure of gold-

[1] The story went that Pan, the god of shepherds, believed the music which he made upon reeds to be better than that which the god Apollo made upon his lyre; he could find no one to agree with him except King Midas, and Apollo, to punish Midas, made him ridiculous by lengthening his ears till they were as big as those of an ass, as if it was the biggest ear that could judge best of music, and an ass therefore was the most intelligent of listeners, when every one knew it to be the stupidest animal.

dust, and bring them from the obscure corners of the room into the one bright and narrow sunbeam that fell from the dungeon-like window. He valued the sunbeam for no other reason but that his treasure would not shine without its help. And then would he reckon over the coins in the bag; toss up the bar, and catch it as it came down; sift the gold-dust through his fingers; look at the funny image of his own face, as reflected in the burnished circumference of the cup, and whisper to himself, "O Midas, rich King Midas, what a happy man art thou!" But it was laughable to see how the image of his face kept grinning at him, out of the polished surface of the cup. It seemed to be aware of his foolish behavior, and to have a naughty inclination to make fun of him.

Midas called himself a happy man, but felt that he was not yet quite so happy as he might be. The very tip-top of enjoyment would never be reached, unless the whole world were to become his treasure-room, and be filled with yellow metal which should be all his own.

Now, I need hardly remind such wise little people as you are, that in the old, old times, when King Midas was alive, a great many things came to pass, which we should consider wonderful if they were to happen in our own day and country. And, on the other hand, a great many things take place nowadays, which seem not only wonderful to us, but at which the people of old times would have stared their eyes out. On the whole, I regard our own times as the strangest of the two; but, however that may be, I must go on with my story.

Midas was enjoying himself in his treasure-room, one day, as usual, when he perceived a shadow fall over the

"What should he behold but the figure of a stranger" — Page 55.

heaps of gold; and, looking suddenly up, what should he behold but the figure of a stranger, standing in the bright and narrow sunbeam! It was a young man, with a cheerful and ruddy face. Whether it was that the imagination of King Midas threw a yellow tinge over everything, or whatever the cause might be, he could not help fancying that the smile with which the stranger regarded him had a kind of golden radiance in it. Certainly, although his figure intercepted the sunshine, there was now a brighter gleam upon all the piled-up treasures than before. Even the remotest corners had their share of it, and were lighted up, when the stranger smiled, as with tips of flame and sparkles of fire.

As Midas knew that he had carefully turned the key in the lock, and that no mortal strength could possibly break into his treasure-room, he, of course, concluded that his visitor must be something more than mortal. It is no matter about telling you who he was. In those days, when the earth was comparatively a new affair, it was supposed to be often the resort of beings endowed with supernatural power, and who used to interest themselves in the joys and sorrows of men, women, and children, half playfully and half seriously. Midas had met such beings before now, and was not sorry to meet one of them again. The stranger's aspect, indeed, was so good-humored and kindly, if not beneficent, that it would have been unreasonable to suspect him of intending any mischief. It was far more probable that he came to do Midas a favor. And what could that favor be, unless to multiply his heaps of treasure?

The stranger gazed about the room; and when his lustrous smile had glistened upon all the golden objects that were there, he turned again to Midas.

"You are a wealthy man, friend Midas!" he observed. "I doubt whether any other four walls, on earth, contain so much gold as you have contrived to pile up in this room."

"I have done pretty well, — pretty well," answered Midas, in a discontented tone. "But, after all, it is but a trifle, when you consider that it has taken me my whole life to get it together. If one could live a thousand years, he might have time to grow rich!"

"What!" exclaimed the stranger. "Then you are not satisfied?"

Midas shook his head.

"And pray what would satisfy you?" asked the stranger. "Merely for the curiosity of the thing, I should be glad to know."

Midas paused and meditated. He felt a presentiment that this stranger, with such a golden lustre in his good-humored smile, had come hither with both the power and the purpose of gratifying his utmost wishes. Now, therefore, was the fortunate moment, when he had but to speak, and obtain whatever possible, or seemingly impossible, thing it might come into his head to ask. So he thought, and thought, and thought, and heaped up one golden mountain upon another, in his imagination, without being able to imagine them big enough. At last, a bright idea occurred to King Midas. It seemed really as bright as the glistening metal which he loved so much.

Raising his head, he looked the lustrous stranger in the face.

"Well, Midas," observed his visitor, "I see that you have at length hit upon something that will satisfy you. Tell me your wish."

"It is only this," replied Midas. "I am weary of collecting my treasures with so much trouble, and beholding the heap so diminutive, after I have done my best. I wish everything that I touch to be changed to gold!"

The stranger's smile grew so very broad that it seemed to fill the room like an outburst of the sun, gleaming into a shadowy dell, where the yellow autumnal leaves — for so looked the lumps and particles of gold — lie strewn in the glow of light.

"The Golden Touch!" exclaimed he. "You certainly deserve credit, friend Midas, for striking out so brilliant a conception. But are you quite sure that this will satisfy you?"

"How could it fail?" said Midas.

"And will you never regret the possession of it?"

"What could induce me?" asked Midas. "I ask nothing else, to render me perfectly happy."

"Be it as you wish, then," replied the stranger, waving his hand in token of farewell. "To-morrow, at sunrise, you will find yourself gifted with the Golden Touch."

The figure of the stranger then became exceedingly bright, and Midas involuntarily closed his eyes. On opening them again, he beheld only one yellow sunbeam in the room, and, all around him, the glistening of the precious metal which he had spent his life in hoarding up.

Whether Midas slept as usual that night, the story does not say. Asleep or awake, however, his mind was probably in the state of a child's, to whom a beautiful new plaything has been promised in the morning. At

any rate, day had hardly peeped over the hills, when King Midas was broad awake, and, stretching his arms out of bed, began to touch the objects that were within reach. He was anxious to prove whether the Golden Touch had really come, according to the stranger's promise. So he laid his finger on a chair by the bedside, and on various other things, but was grievously disappointed to perceive that they remained of exactly the same substance as before. Indeed, he felt very much afraid that he had only dreamed about the lustrous stranger, or else that the latter had been making game of him. And what a miserable affair would it be, if, after all his hopes, Midas must content himself with what little gold he could scrape together by ordinary means, instead of creating it by a touch!

All this while, it was only the gray of the morning, with but a streak of brightness along the edge of the sky, where Midas could not see it. He lay in a very disconsolate mood, regretting the downfall of his hopes, and kept growing sadder and sadder, until the earliest sunbeam shone through the window, and gilded the ceiling over his head. It seemed to Midas that this bright yellow sunbeam was reflected in rather a singular way on the white covering of the bed. Looking more closely, what was his astonishment and delight, when he found that this linen fabric had been transmuted to what seemed a woven texture of the purest and brightest gold! The Golden Touch had come to him with the first sunbeam!

Midas started up, in a kind of joyful frenzy, and ran about the room, grasping at everything that happened to be in his way. He seized one of the bedposts, and it became immediately a fluted golden pillar. He pulled

aside a window-curtain, in order to admit a clear spectacle of the wonders which he was performing, and the tassel grew heavy in his hand, — a mass of gold. He took up a book from the table. At his first touch, it assumed the appearance of such a splendidly-bound and gilt-edged volume as one often meets with nowadays; but, on running his fingers through the leaves, behold! it was a bundle of thin golden plates, in which all the wisdom of the book had grown illegible. He hurriedly put on his clothes, and was enraptured to see himself in a magnificent suit of gold cloth, which retained its flexibility and softness, although it burdened him a little with its weight. He drew out his handkerchief, which little Marygold had hemmed for him. That was likewise gold, with the dear child's neat and pretty stitches running all along the border, in gold thread!

Somehow or other, this last transformation did not quite please King Midas. He would rather that his little daughter's handiwork should have remained just the same as when she climbed his knee and put it into his hand.

But it was not worth while to vex himself about a trifle. Midas now took his spectacles from his pocket, and put them on his nose, in order that he might see more distinctly what he was about. In those days, spectacles for common people had not been invented, but were already worn by kings; else, how could Midas have had any? To his great perplexity, however, excellent as the glasses were, he discovered that he could not possibly see through them. But this was the most natural thing in the world; for, on taking them off, the transparent crystals turned out to be plates of yellow

metal, and, of course, were worthless as spectacles, though valuable as gold. It struck Midas as rather inconvenient, that, with all his wealth, he could never again be rich enough to own a pair of serviceable spectacles.

"It is no great matter, nevertheless," said he to himself, very philosophically. "We cannot expect any great good without its being accompanied with some small inconvenience. The Golden Touch is worth the sacrifice of a pair of spectacles, at least, if not of one's very eyesight. My own eyes will serve for ordinary purposes, and little Marygold will soon be old enough to read to me."

Wise King Midas was so exalted by his good fortune, that the palace seemed not sufficiently spacious to contain him. He therefore went down stairs, and smiled on observing that the balustrade of the staircase became a bar of burnished gold, as his hand passed over it, in his descent. He lifted the door-latch (it was brass only a moment ago, but golden when his fingers quitted it) and emerged into the garden. Here, as it happened, he found a great number of beautiful roses in full bloom, and others in all the stages of lovely bud and blossom. Very delicious was their fragrance in the morning breeze. Their delicate blush was one of the fairest sights in the world; so gentle, so modest, and so full of sweet tranquillity, did these roses seem to be.

But Midas knew a way to make them far more precious, according to his way of thinking, than roses had ever been before. So he took great pains in going from bush to bush, and exercised his magic touch most indefatigably, until every individual flower and bud, and

even the worms at the heart of some of them, were changed to gold. By the time this good work was completed, King Midas was summoned to breakfast; and, as the morning air had given him an excellent appetite, he made haste back to the palace.

What was usually a king's breakfast in the days of Midas, I really do not know, and cannot stop now to investigate. To the best of my belief, however, on this particular morning, the breakfast consisted of hot cakes, some nice little brook trout, roasted potatoes, fresh boiled eggs, and coffee, for King Midas himself, and a bowl of bread and milk for his daughter Marygold. At all events, this is a breakfast fit to set before a king; and, whether he had it or not, King Midas could not have had a better.

Little Marygold had not yet made her appearance. Her father ordered her to be called, and, seating himself at table, awaited the child's coming, in order to begin his own breakfast. To do Midas justice, he really loved his little daughter, and loved her so much the more this morning, on account of the good fortune which had befallen him. It was not a great while before he heard her coming along the passage-way crying bitterly. This circumstance surprised him, because Marygold was one of the cheerfullest little people whom you would see in a summer's day, and hardly shed a thimbleful of tears in a twelvemonth. When Midas heard her sobs, he determined to put little Marygold into better spirits, by an agreeable surprise; so, leaning across the table, he touched his daughter's bowl (which was a China one, with pretty figures all around it), and transmuted it to gleaming gold.

Meanwhile, Marygold slowly and disconsolately opened the door, and showed herself with her apron at her eyes, still sobbing as if her heart would break.

"How now, my little lady!" cried Midas. "Pray what is the matter with you, this bright morning?"

Marygold, without taking the apron from her eyes, held out her hand, in which was one of the roses which Midas had so recently transmuted.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed her father. "And what is there in this magnificent golden rose to make you cry?"

"Ah, dear father!" answered the child, as well as her sobs would let her, "it is not beautiful, but the ugliest flower that ever grew! As soon as I was dressed, I ran into the garden to gather some roses for you; because I know you like them, and like them the better when gathered by your little daughter. But, oh dear, dear me! What do you think has happened? Such a misfortune! All the beautiful roses, that smelled so sweetly and had so many lovely blushes, are blighted and spoilt! They are grown quite yellow, as you see this one, and have no longer any fragrance! What can have been the matter with them?"

"Poh, my dear little girl, — pray don't cry about it!" said Midas, who was ashamed to confess that he himself had wrought the change which so greatly afflicted her. "Sit down and eat your bread and milk! You will find it easy enough to exchange a golden rose like that (which will last hundreds of years) for an ordinary one which would wither in a day."

"I don't care for such roses as this!" cried Marygold, tossing it contemptuously away. "It has no smell, and the hard petals prick my nose!"

The child now sat down to table, but was so occupied with her grief for the blighted roses that she did not even notice the wonderful transmutation of her China bowl. Perhaps this was all the better; for Marygold was accustomed to take pleasure in looking at the queer figures, and strange trees and houses, that were painted on the circumference of the bowl; and these ornaments were now entirely lost in the yellow hue of the metal.

Midas, meanwhile, had poured out a cup of coffee; and, as a matter of course, the coffee-pot, whatever metal it may have been when he took it up, was gold when he set it down. He thought to himself, that it was rather an extravagant style of splendor, in a king of his simple habits, to breakfast off a service of gold, and began to be puzzled with the difficulty of keeping his treasures safe. The cupboard and the kitchen would no longer be a secure place of deposit for articles so valuable as golden bowls and coffee-pots.

Amid these thoughts, he lifted a spoonful of coffee to his lips, and, sipping it, was astonished to perceive that the instant his lips touched the liquid, it became molten gold, and, the next moment, hardened into a lump!

"Ha!" exclaimed Midas, rather aghast.

"What is the matter, father?" asked little Marygold, gazing at him, with the tears still standing in her eyes.

"Nothing, child, nothing!" said Midas. "Eat your milk, before it gets quite cold."

He took one of the nice little trouts on his plate, and, by way of experiment, touched its tail with his finger. To his horror, it was immediately transmuted from an admirably-fried brook trout into a gold fish, though not

one of those gold-fishes which people often keep in glass globes, as ornaments for the parlor. No; but it was really a metallic fish, and looked as if it had been very cunningly made by the nicest goldsmith in the world. Its little bones were now golden wires; its fins and tail were thin plates of gold; and there were the marks of the fork in it, and all the delicate, frothy appearance of a nicely fried fish, exactly imitated in metal. A very pretty piece of work, as you may suppose; only King Midas, just at that moment, would much rather have had a real trout in his dish than this elaborate and valuable imitation of one.

"I don't quite see," thought he to himself, "how I am to get any breakfast!"

He took one of the smoking-hot cakes, and had scarcely broken it, when, to his cruel mortification, though, a moment before, it had been of the whitest wheat, it assumed the yellow hue of Indian meal. To say the truth, if it had really been a hot Indian cake, Midas would have prized it a good deal more than he now did, when its solidity and increased weight made him too bitterly sensible that it was gold. Almost in despair, he helped himself to a boiled egg, which immediately underwent a change similar to those of the trout and the cake. The egg, indeed, might have been mistaken for one of those which the famous goose, in the story-book, was in the habit of laying; but King Midas was the only goose that had had anything to do with the matter.

"Well, this is a quandary!" thought he, leaning back in his chair, and looking quite enviously at little Marygold, who was now eating her bread and milk with

great satisfaction. "Such a costly breakfast before me, and nothing that can be eaten!"

Hoping that, by dint of great despatch, he might avoid what he now felt to be a considerable inconvenience, King Midas next snatched a hot potato, and attempted to cram it into his mouth, and swallow it in a hurry. But the Golden Touch was too nimble for him. He found his mouth full, not of mealy potato, but of solid metal, which so burnt his tongue that he roared aloud, and, jumping up from the table, began to dance and stamp about the room, both with pain and affright.

"Father, dear father!" cried little Marygold, who was a very affectionate child, "pray, what is the matter? Have you burnt your mouth?"

"Ah, dear child," groaned Midas, dolefully, "I don't know what is to become of your poor father!"

And, truly, my dear little folks, did you ever hear of such a pitiable case in all your lives? Here was literally the richest breakfast that could be set before a king, and its very richness made it absolutely good for nothing. The poorest laborer, sitting down to his crust of bread and cup of water, was far better off than King Midas, whose delicate food was really worth its weight in gold. And what was to be done? Already, at breakfast, Midas was excessively hungry. Would he be less so by dinner-time? And how ravenous would be his appetite for supper, which must undoubtedly consist of the same sort of indigestible dishes as those now before him! How many days, think you, would he survive a continuance of this rich fare?

These reflections so troubled wise King Midas, that he began to doubt whether, after all, riches are the one de-

sirable thing in the world, or even the most desirable. But this was only a passing thought. So fascinated was Midas with the glitter of the yellow metal, that he would still have refused to give up the Golden Touch for so paltry a consideration as a breakfast. Just imagine what a price for one meal's victuals! It would have been the same as paying millions and millions of money (and as many millions more as would take forever to reckon up) for some fried trout, an egg, a potato, a hot cake, and a cup of coffee!

"It would be quite too dear," thought Midas.

Nevertheless, so great was his hunger, and the perplexity of his situation, that he again groaned aloud, and very grievously too. Our pretty Marygold could endure it no longer. She sat, a moment, gazing at her father, and trying, with all the might of her little wits, to find out what was the matter with him. Then, with a sweet and sorrowful impulse to comfort him, she started from her chair, and, running to Midas, threw her arms affectionately about his knees. He bent down and kissed her. He felt that his little daughter's love was worth a thousand times more than he had gained by the Golden Touch.

"My precious, precious Marygold!" cried he.

But Marygold made no answer.

Alas, what had he done? How fatal was the gift which the stranger bestowed! The moment the lips of Midas touched Marygold's forehead, a change had taken place. Her sweet, rosy face, so full of affection as it had been, assumed a glittering yellow color, with yellow tear-drops congealing on her cheeks. Her beautiful brown ringlets took the same tint. Her soft and tender

little form grew hard and inflexible within her father's encircling arms. O, terrible misfortune! The victim of his insatiable desire for wealth, little Marygold was a human child no longer, but a golden statue!

Yes, there she was, with the questioning look of love, grief, and pity, hardened into her face. It was the prettiest and most woful sight that ever mortal saw. All the features and tokens of Marygold were there; even the beloved little dimple remained in her golden chin. But, the more perfect was the resemblance, the greater was the father's agony at beholding this golden image, which was all that was left him of a daughter. It had been a favorite phrase of Midas, whenever he felt particularly fond of the child, to say that she was worth her weight in gold. And now the phrase had become literally true. And now, at last, when it was too late, he felt how infinitely a warm and tender heart, that loved him, exceeded in value all the wealth that could be piled up betwixt the earth and sky!

It would be too sad a story, if I were to tell you how Midas, in the fulness of all his gratified desires, began to wring his hands and bemoan himself; and how he could neither bear to look at Marygold, nor yet to look away from her. Except when his eyes were fixed on the image, he could not possibly believe that she was changed to gold. But, stealing another glance, there was the precious little figure, with a yellow tear-drop on its yellow cheek, and a look so piteous and tender, that it seemed as if that very expression must needs soften the gold, and make it flesh again. This, however, could not be. So Midas had only to wring his hands, and to wish that he were the poorest man in the wide world, if

the loss of all his wealth might bring back the faintest rose-color to his dear child's face.

While he was in this tumult of despair, he suddenly beheld a stranger, standing near the door. Midas bent down his head, without speaking; for he recognized the same figure which had appeared to him, the day before, in the treasure-room, and had bestowed on him this disastrous faculty of the Golden Touch. The stranger's countenance still wore a smile, which seemed to shed a yellow lustre all about the room, and gleamed on little Marygold's image, and on the other objects that had been transmuted by the touch of Midas.

"Well, friend Midas," said the stranger, "pray how do you succeed with the Golden Touch?"

Midas shook his head.

"I am very miserable," said he.

"Very miserable, indeed!" exclaimed the stranger. "And how happens that? Have I not faithfully kept my promise with you? Have you not everything that your heart desired?"

"Gold is not everything," answered Midas. "And I have lost all that my heart really cared for."

"Ah! So you have made a discovery, since yesterday?" observed the stranger. "Let us see, then. Which of these two things do you think is really worth the most, — the gift of the Golden Touch, or one cup of clear cold water?"

"O blessed water!" exclaimed Midas. "It will never moisten my parched throat again!"

"The Golden Touch," continued the stranger, "or a crust of bread?"

"A piece of bread," answered Midas, "is worth all the gold on earth!"

"The Golden Touch," asked the stranger, "or your own little Marygold, warm, soft, and loving, as she was an hour ago?"

"O my child, my dear child!" cried poor Midas wringing his hands. "I would not have given that one small dimple in her chin for the power of changing this whole big earth into a solid lump of gold!"

"You are wiser than you were, King Midas!" said the stranger, looking seriously at him. "Your own heart, I perceive, has not been entirely changed from flesh to gold. Were it so, your case would indeed be desperate. But you appear to be still capable of understanding that the commonest things, such as lie within everybody's grasp, are more valuable than the riches which so many mortals sigh and struggle after. Tell me, now, do you sincerely desire to rid yourself of this Golden Touch?"

"It is hateful to me!" replied Midas.

A fly settled on his nose, but immediately fell to the floor; for it, too, had become gold. Midas shuddered.

"Go, then," said the stranger, "and plunge into the river that glides past the bottom of your garden. Take likewise a vase of the same water, and sprinkle it over any object that you may desire to change back again from gold into its former substance. If you do this in earnestness and sincerity, it may possibly repair the mischief which your avarice has occasioned."

King Midas bowed low; and when he lifted his head, the lustrous stranger had vanished.

You will easily believe that Midas lost no time in snatching up a great earthen pitcher (but, alas me! it was no longer earthen after he touched it), and hasten-

ing to the river-side. As he scampered along, and forced his way through the shrubbery, it was positively marvellous to see how the foliage turned yellow behind him, as if the autumn had been there, and nowhere else. On reaching the river's brink, he plunged headlong in, without waiting so much as to pull off his shoes.

"Poof! poof! poof!" snorted King Midas, as his head emerged out of the water. "Well; this is really a refreshing bath, and I think it must have quite washed away the Golden Touch. And now for filling my pitcher!"

As he dipped the pitcher into the water, it gladdened his very heart to see it change from gold into the same good, honest earthen vessel which it had been before he touched it. He was conscious, also, of a change within himself. A cold, hard, and heavy weight seemed to have gone out of his bosom. No doubt, his heart had been gradually losing its human substance, and transmuting itself into insensible metal, but had now softened back again into flesh. Perceiving a violet, that grew on the bank of the river, Midas touched it with his finger, and was overjoyed to find that the delicate flower retained its purple hue, instead of undergoing a yellow blight. The curse of the Golden Touch had, therefore, really been removed from him.

King Midas hastened back to the palace; and, I suppose, the servants knew not what to make of it when they saw their royal master so carefully bringing home an earthen pitcher of water. But that water, which was to undo all the mischief that his folly had wrought, was more precious to Midas than an ocean of molten gold could have been. The first thing he did, as you need

hardly be told, was to sprinkle it by handfuls over the golden figure of little Marygold.

No sooner did it fall on her than you would have laughed to see how the rosy color came back to the dear child's cheek! — and how she began to sneeze and sputter! — and how astonished she was to find herself dripping wet, and her father still throwing more water over her!

"Pray do not, dear father!" cried she. "See how you have wet my nice frock, which I put on only this morning!"

For Marygold did not know that she had been a little golden statue; nor could she remember anything that had happened since the moment when she ran with outstretched arms to comfort poor King Midas.

Her father did not think it necessary to tell his beloved child how very foolish he had been, but contented himself with showing how much wiser he had now grown. For this purpose, he led little Marygold into the garden, where he sprinkled all the remainder of the water over the rose-bushes, and with such good effect that above five thousand roses recovered their beautiful bloom. There were two circumstances, however, which, as long as he lived, used to put King Midas in mind of the Golden Touch. One was, that the sands of the river sparkled like gold; the other, that little Marygold's hair had now a golden tinge, which he had never observed in it before she had been transmuted by the effect of his kiss. This change of hue was really an improvement, and made Marygold's hair richer than in her babyhood.

When King Midas had grown quite an old man, and

used to trot Marygold's children on his knee, he was fond of telling them this marvellous story, pretty much as I have now told it to you. And then would he stroke their glossy ringlets, and tell them that their hair, likewise, had a rich shade of gold, which they had inherited from their mother.

"And, to tell you the truth, my precious little folks," quoth King Midas, diligently trotting the children all the while, "ever since that morning, I have hated the very sight of all other gold, save this!"

"The rainy twilight of an Autumn day." — Page 73.

THE WIVES OF THE DEAD.

THE following story, the simple and domestic incidents of which may be deemed scarcely worth relating, after such a lapse of time, awakened some degree of interest, a hundred years ago, in a principal seaport of the Bay Province.[1] The rainy twilight of an autumn day, — a parlor on the second floor of a small house, plainly furnished, as beseemed the middling circumstances of its inhabitants, yet decorated with little curiosities from beyond the sea, and a few delicate specimens of Indian manufacture, — these are the only particulars to be premised in regard to scene and season. Two young and comely women sat together by the fireside, nursing their mutual and peculiar sorrows. They were the recent brides of two brothers, a sailor and a landsman, and two successive days had brought tidings of the death of each, by the chances of Canadian warfare and the tempestuous Atlantic. The universal sympathy excited by this bereavement drew numerous condoling guests to the habitation of the widowed sisters. Several, among whom was the minister, had remained till the verge of evening; when, one by one, whispering many comfortable passages of Scripture, that were answered by more abundant

[1] The Province of Massachusetts Bay was the title by which Massachusetts was known after 1691, when the old charter given to the first colonists had been withdrawn and a new one given by William and Mary, King and Queen of England. Under the old charter the people of Massachusetts had chosen their own governor; under the new, the Crown appointed the governor, and this continued until the Revolution.

tears, they took their leave, and departed to their own happier homes. The mourners, though not insensible to the kindness of their friends, had yearned to be left alone. United, as they had been, by the relationship of the living, and now more closely so by that of the dead, each felt as if whatever consolation her grief admitted were to be found in the bosom of the other. They joined their hearts, and wept together silently. But after an hour of such indulgence, one of the sisters, all of whose emotions were influenced by her mild, quiet, yet not feeble character, began to recollect the precepts of resignation and endurance which piety had taught her, when she did not think to need them. Her misfortune, besides, as earliest known, should earliest cease to interfere with her regular course of duties; accordingly, having placed the table before the fire, and arranged a frugal meal, she took the hand of her companion.

"Come, dearest sister; you have eaten not a morsel to-day," she said. "Arise, I pray you, and let us ask a blessing on that which is provided for us."

Her sister-in-law was of a lively and irritable temperament, and the first pangs of her sorrow had been expressed by shrieks and passionate lamentation. She now shrunk from Mary's words, like a wounded sufferer from a hand that revives the throb.

"There is no blessing left for me, neither will I ask it!" cried Margaret, with a fresh burst of tears. "Would it were His will that I might never taste food more!"

Yet she trembled at these rebellious expressions, almost as soon as they were uttered, and, by degrees, Mary succeeded in bringing her sister's mind nearer to

the situation of her own. Time went on, and their usual hour of repose arrived. The brothers and their brides, entering the married state with no more than the slender means which then sanctioned such a step, had confederated themselves in one household, with equal rights to the parlor, and claiming exclusive privileges in two sleeping-rooms contiguous to it. Thither the widowed ones retired, after heaping ashes upon the dying embers of their fire, and placing a lighted lamp upon the hearth. The doors of both chambers were left open, so that a part of the interior of each, and the beds with their unclosed curtains, were reciprocally visible. Sleep did not steal upon the sisters at one and the same time. Mary experienced the effect often consequent upon grief quietly borne, and soon sank into temporary forgetfulness, while Margaret became more disturbed and feverish, in proportion as the night advanced with its deepest and stillest hours. She lay listening to the drops of rain, that came down in monotonous succession, unswayed by a breath of wind; and a nervous impulse continually caused her to lift her head from the pillow, and gaze into Mary's chamber and the intermediate apartment. The cold light of the lamp threw the shadows of the furniture up against the wall, stamping them immovably there, except when they were shaken by a sudden flicker of the flame. Two vacant arm-chairs were in their old positions on opposite sides of the hearth, where the brothers had been wont to sit in young and laughing dignity, as heads of families; two humbler seats were near them, the true thrones of that little empire, where Mary and herself had exercised in love a power that love had won. The cheerful radiance of the fire had shone

upon the happy circle, and the dead glimmer of the lamp might have befitted their reunion now. While Margaret groaned in bitterness, she heard a knock at the street-door.

"How would my heart have leapt at that sound but yesterday!" thought she, remembering the anxiety with which she had long awaited tidings from her husband. "I care not for it now; let them begone, for I will not arise."

But even while a sort of childish fretfulness made her thus resolve, she was breathing hurriedly, and straining her ears to catch a repetition of the summons. It is difficult to be convinced of the death of one whom we have deemed another self. The knocking was now renewed in slow and regular strokes, apparently given with the soft end of a doubled fist, and was accompanied by words, faintly heard through several thicknesses of wall. Margaret looked to her sister's chamber, and beheld her still lying in the depths of sleep. She arose, placed her foot upon the floor, and slightly arrayed herself, trembling between fear and eagerness as she did so.

"Heaven help me!" sighed she. "I have nothing left to fear, and methinks I am ten times more a coward than ever."

Seizing the lamp from the hearth, she hastened to the window that overlooked the street-door. It was a lattice, turning upon hinges; and having thrown it back, she stretched her head a little way into the moist atmosphere. A lantern was reddening the front of the house, and melting its light in the neighboring puddles, while a deluge of darkness overwhelmed every other object. As

the window grated on its hinges, a man in a broad-brimmed hat and blanket-coat stepped from under the shelter of the projecting story, and looked upward to discover whom his application had aroused. Margaret knew him as a friendly innkeeper of the town.

"What would you have, Goodman [1] Parker?" cried the widow.

"Lackaday, is it you, Mistress Margaret?" replied the innkeeper. "I was afraid it might be your sister Mary; for I hate to see a young woman in trouble, when I have n't a word of comfort to whisper her."

"For Heaven's sake, what news do you bring?" screamed Margaret.

"Why, there has been an express [2] through the town within this half-hour," said Goodman Parker, "travelling from the eastern jurisdiction [3] with letters for the governor and council. He tarried at my house to refresh himself with a drop and a morsel, and I asked him what tidings on the frontiers. He tells me we had the better in the skirmish you wot of, and that thirteen men reported slain are well and sound, and your husband among them. Besides, he is appointed of the escort to

[1] In the days of which this story tells there was a more nice distinction of rank among people in New England than now. The titles Mr. and Mrs. were given to a few only, who were looked up to as the most important persons. In the great body of citizens, the titles used were Goodman and Goodwife.

[2] Before the establishment of a regular system of mails, and even for some time after, special messengers or expresses were despatched with important letters and documents.

[3] The eastern jurisdiction refers to Maine and Nova Scotia, which were then included within the territory of the Province.

bring the captured Frenchers and Indians [1] home to the province jail. I judged you would n't mind being broke of your rest, and so I stepped over to tell you. Good-night."

So saying, the honest man departed; and his lantern [2] gleamed along the street, bringing to view indistinct shapes of things, and the fragments of a world, like order glimmering through chaos, or memory roaming over the past. But Margaret stayed not to watch these picturesque effects. Joy flashed into her heart, and lighted it up at once; and breathless, and with winged steps, she flew to the bedside of her sister. She paused, however, at the door of the chamber, while a thought of pain broke in upon her.

"Poor Mary!" said she to herself. "Shall I waken her, to feel her sorrow sharpened by my happiness? No; I will keep it within my own bosom till the morrow."

She approached the bed, to discover if Mary's sleep were peaceful. Her face was turned partly inward to the pillow, and had been hidden there to weep; but a look of motionless contentment was now visible upon it, as if her heart like a deep lake had grown calm because its dead had sunk down so far within. Happy is it, and

[1] The exact time of the events of this story is not given; but the wars with the French and Indians continued with occasional periods of peace from 1689 to 1763.

[2] The name of the seaport where the scene of this story is laid is not given; it was not Boston, for the messenger is described as passing through the town on his way to the seat of government. But in Boston, the town did not set up any street lamps until 1773, although a few years earlier some householders had hung out lights.

strange, that the lighter sorrows are those from which dreams are chiefly fabricated. Margaret shrank from disturbing her sister-in-law, and felt as if her own better fortune had rendered her involuntarily unfaithful, and as if altered and diminished affection must be the consequence of the disclosure she had to make. With a sudden step she turned away. But joy could not long be repressed, even by circumstances that would have excited heavy grief at another moment. Her mind was thronged with delightful thoughts, till sleep stole on, and transformed them to visions, more delightful and more wild, like the breath of winter (but what a cold comparison!) working fantastic tracery upon a window

When the night was far advanced, Mary awoke with a sudden start. A vivid dream had latterly involved her in its unreal life, of which, however, she could only remember that it had been broken in upon at the most interesting point. For a little time, slumber hung about her like a morning mist, hindering her from perceiving the distinct outline of her situation. She listened with imperfect consciousness to two or three volleys of a rapid and eager knocking; at first she deemed the noise a matter of course, like the breath she drew; next, it appeared a thing in which she had no concern; and lastly, she became aware that it was a summons necessary to be obeyed. At the same moment, the pang of recollection darted into her mind; the pall of sleep was thrown back from the face of grief; the dim light of the chamber, and the objects therein revealed, had retained all her suspended ideas, and restored them as soon as she unclosed her eyes. Again there was a quick peal upon the street-door. Fearing that her sister would also

be disturbed, Mary wrapped herself in a cloak and hood, took the lamp from the hearth, and hastened to the window. By some accident, it had been left unhasped, and yielded easily to her hand.

"Who 's there?" asked Mary, trembling as she looked forth.

The storm was over, and the moon was up; it shone upon broken clouds above, and below upon houses black with moisture, and upon little lakes of the fallen rain, curling into silver beneath the quick enchantment of a breeze. A young man in a sailor's dress, wet as if he had come out of the depths of the sea, stood alone under the window. Mary recognized him as one whose livelihood was gained by short voyages along the coast; nor did she forget that, previous to her marriage, he had been an unsuccessful wooer of her own.

"What do you seek here, Stephen?" said she.

"Cheer up, Mary, for I seek to comfort you," answered the rejected lover. "You must know I got home not ten minutes ago, and the first thing my good mother told me was the news about your husband. So, without saying a word to the old woman, I clapped on my hat, and ran out of the house. I could n't have slept a wink before speaking to you, Mary, for the sake of old times."

"Stephen, I thought better of you!" exclaimed the widow, with gushing tears and preparing to close the lattice; for she was no whit inclined to imitate the first wife of Zadig.[1]

[1] *Zadig; or, the Book of Fate,* is the title of a story by Voltaire, in pretended translation from the Arabic. The first wife of Zadig was a heartless coquette, and her husband, to try her,

"But stop, and hear my story out," cried the young sailor. "I tell you we spoke a brig yesterday afternoon, bound in from Old England. And who do you think I saw standing on deck, well and hearty, only a bit thinner than he was five months ago?"

Mary leaned from the window, but could not speak.

"Why, it was your husband himself," continued the generous seaman. "He and three others saved themselves on a spar, when the Blessing turned bottom upwards. The brig will beat into the bay by daylight, with this wind, and you 'll see him here to-morrow. There 's the comfort I bring you, Mary, and so good-night."

He hurried away, while Mary watched him with a doubt of waking reality, that seemed stronger or weaker as he alternately entered the shade of the houses, or emerged into the broad streaks of moonlight. Gradually, however, a blessed flood of conviction swelled into her heart, in strength enough to overwhelm her, had its increase been more abrupt. Her first impulse was to rouse her sister-in-law, and communicate the new-born gladness. She opened the chamber-door, which had been closed in the course of the night, though not latched, advanced to the bedside, and was about to lay her hand upon the slumberer's shoulder. But then she remembered that Margaret would awake to thoughts of death and woe, rendered not the less bitter by their contrast with her own felicity. She suffered the rays of the lamp to fall upon the unconscious form of the bereaved one. Margaret lay in unquiet sleep, and the

feigned death. Within twenty-four hours she was able to dry her tears and was ready to take a second husband.

drapery was displaced around her; her young cheek was rosy-tinted, and her lips half opened in a vivid smile; an expression of joy, debarred its passage by her sealed eyelids, struggled forth like incense from the whole countenance.

"My poor sister! you will waken too soon from that happy dream," thought Mary.

Before retiring, she set down the lamp, and endeavored to arrange the bedclothes so that the chill air might not do harm to the feverish slumberer. But her hand trembled against Margaret's neck, a tear also fell upon her cheek, and she suddenly awoke.

"Bright sunshine and Autumnal warmth." — Page 83.

PASSAGES FROM NOTE-BOOKS.

AN AUTUMN WALK.

October 7, 1837. — A walk in Northfields[1] in the afternoon. Bright sunshine and autumnal warmth, giving a sensation quite unlike the same degree of warmth in summer. Oaks, — some brown, some reddish, some still green; walnuts, yellow, — fallen leaves and acorns lying beneath; the footsteps crumple them in walking. In sunny spots beneath the trees, where green grass is overstrewn by the dry, fallen foliage, as I passed, I disturbed multitudes of grasshoppers basking in the warm sunshine; and they began to hop, hop, hop, pattering on the dry leaves like big and heavy drops of a thundershower. They were invisible till they hopped. Boys gathering walnuts. Passed an orchard, where two men were gathering the apples. A wagon, with barrels, stood among the trees; the men's coats flung on the fence; the apples lay in heaps, and each of the men was up in a separate tree. They conversed together in loud voices, which the air caused to ring still louder, jeering each other, boasting of their own feats in shaking down the apples. One got into the very top of his tree, and gave a long and mighty shake, and the big apples came down thump, thump, bushels hitting on the ground at once. "There! did you ever hear anything like that?" cried he. This sunny scene was pretty. A horse feeding apart, belonging to the wagon. The barberry-bushes have some red fruit on them, but they are frost-bitten. The rose-bushes have their scarlet hips.

[1] Near Salem, Massachusetts.

Distant clumps of trees, now that the variegated foliage adorns them, have a phantasmagorian, an apparition-like appearance. They seem to be of some kindred to the crimson and gold cloud-islands. It would not be strange to see phantoms peeping forth from their recesses. When the sun was almost below the horizon, his rays, gilding the upper branches of a yellow walnut-tree, had an airy and beautiful effect, — the gentle contrast between the tint of the yellow in the shade and its ethereal gold in the fading sunshine. The woods that crown distant uplands were seen to great advantage in these last rays, for the sunshine perfectly marked out and distinguished every shade of color, varnishing them as it were; while the country round, both hill and plain, being in gloomy shadow, the woods looked the brighter for it.

The tide, being high, had flowed almost into the Cold Spring, so its small current hardly issued forth from the basin. As I approached, two little eels, about as long as my finger, and slender in proportion, wriggled out of the basin. They had come from the salt water. An Indian-corn field, as yet unharvested, — huge, golden pumpkins scattered among the hills of corn, — a noble-looking fruit. After the sun was down, the sky was deeply dyed with a broad sweep of gold, high towards the zenith; not flaming brightly, but of a somewhat dusky gold. A piece of water, extending towards the west, between high banks, caught the reflection, and appeared like a sheet of brighter and more glistening gold than the sky which made it bright.

Dandelions and blue flowers are still growing in sunny places. Saw in a barn a prodigious treasure of onions in their silvery coats, exhaling a penetrating perfume.

A STROLL UPON THE BEACH.

October 16, 1837. — Spent the whole afternoon in a ramble to the sea-shore, near Phillips's Beach. A beautiful, warm, sunny afternoon, the very pleasantest day, probably, that there has been in the whole course of the year. People at work, harvesting, without their coats. Cocks, with their squad of hens, in the grass-fields, hunting grasshoppers, chasing them eagerly with outspread wings, appearing to take much interest in the sport, apart from the profit. Other hens picking up the ears of Indian corn. Grasshoppers, flies, and flying insects of all sorts are more abundant in these warm autumnal days than I have seen them at any other time. Yellow butterflies flutter about in the sunshine, singly, by pairs, or more, and are wafted on the gentle gales. The crickets begin to sing early in the afternoon, and sometimes a locust may be heard. In some warm spots, a pleasant buzz of many insects.

Crossed the fields near Brookhouse's villa, and came upon a long beach, — at least a mile long, I should think, — terminated by craggy rocks at either end, and backed by a high broken bank, the grassy summit of which, year by year, is continually breaking away, and precipitated to the bottom. At the foot of the bank, in some parts, is a vast number of pebbles and paving-stones, rolled up thither by the sea long ago. The beach is of a brown sand, with hardly any pebbles intermixed upon it. When the tide is part way down, there is a margin of several yards from the water's edge, along the whole mile length of the beach, which glistens like a mirror, and reflects objects, and shines bright in the sunshine, the sand being

wet to that distance from the water. Above this margin the sand is not wet, and grows less and less damp the farther towards the bank you keep. In some places your footstep is perfectly implanted, showing the whole shape, and the square toe, and every nail in the heel of your boot. Elsewhere, the impression is imperfect, and even when you stamp, you cannot imprint the whole. As you tread, a dry spot flashes around your step, and grows moist as you lift your foot again. Pleasant to pass along this extensive walk, watching the surf-wave; — how sometimes it seems to make a feint of breaking, but dies away ineffectually, merely kissing the strand; then, after many such abortive efforts, it gathers itself, and forms a high wall, and rolls onward, heightening and heightening without foam at the summit of the green line, and at last throws itself fiercely on the beach, with a loud roar, the spray flying above. As you walk along, you are preceded by a flock of twenty or thirty beach birds,[1] which are seeking, I suppose, for food on the margin of the surf, yet seem to be merely sporting, chasing the sea as it retires, and running up before the impending wave. Sometimes they let it bear them off their feet, and float lightly on its breaking summit; sometimes they flutter and seem to rest on the feathery spray. They are little birds with gray backs and snow-white breasts; their images may be seen in the wet sand almost or quite as distinctly as the reality. Their legs are long. As you draw near, they take a flight of a score of yards or more, and then recommence their dalliance with the surf-wave. You may behold their multitudinous little tracks all along your way. Before

[1] Sand-peeps.

"In some places your footstep is perfectly implanted" Page 86.

you reach the end of the beach, you become quite attached to these little sea-birds, and take much interest in their occupations. After passing in one direction, it is pleasant then to retrace your footsteps. Your tracks being all traceable, you may recall the whole mood and occupation of your mind during your first passage. Here you turned somewhat aside to pick up a shell that you saw nearer the water's edge. Here you examined a long sea-weed, and trailed its length after you for a considerable distance. Here the effect of the wide sea struck you suddenly. Here you fronted the ocean, looking at a sail, distant in the sunny blue. Here you looked at some plant on the bank. Here some vagary of mind seems to have bewildered you; for your tracks go round and round, and interchange each other without visible reason. Here you picked up pebbles and skipped them upon the water. Here you wrote names and drew faces with a razor sea-shell in the sand.

After leaving the beach, clambered over crags, all shattered and tossed about everyhow; in some parts curiously worn and hollowed out, almost into caverns. The rock, shagged with sea-weed, — in some places, a thick carpet of sea-weed laid over the pebbles, into which your foot would sink. Deep tanks among these rocks, which the sea replenishes at high tide, and then leaves the bottom all covered with various sorts of sea-plants, as if it were some sea-monster's private garden. I saw a crab in one of them; five-fingers too. From the edge of the rocks, you may look off into deep, deep water, even at low tide. Among the rocks, I found a great bird, whether a wild-goose, a loon, or an albatross, I scarcely know. It was in such a position that I

almost fancied it might be asleep, and therefore drew near softly, lest it should take flight; but it was dead, and stirred not when I touched it. Sometimes a dead fish was cast up. A ledge of rocks, with a beacon upon it, looking like a monument erected to those who have perished by shipwreck. The smoked, extempore fireplace, where a party cooked their fish. About midway on the beach, a fresh-water brooklet flows towards the sea. Where it leaves the land, it is quite a rippling little current; but, in flowing across the sand, it grows shallower and more shallow, and at last is quite lost, and dies in the effort to carry its little tribute to the main.

A VISIT TO SOME LIME-KILNS.

[*North Adams, Mass.*] *September 7th.* — Mr. Leach and I took a walk by moonlight last evening, on the road that leads over the mountain. Remote from houses, far up on the hill-side, we found a lime-kiln, burning near the road; and, approaching it, a watcher started from the ground, where he had been lying at his length. There are several of these lime-kilns in this vicinity. They are circular, built with stones, like a round tower, eighteen or twenty feet high, having a hillock heaped around in a great portion of their circumference, so that the marble may be brought and thrown in by cart-loads at the top. At the bottom there is a doorway, large enough to admit a man in a stooping posture. Thus an edifice of great solidity is constructed, which will endure for centuries, unless needless pains are taken to tear it down. There is one on the hill-side, close to the village, wherein weeds grow at the bottom, and grass and shrubs too are rooted in the interstices of the stones, and its

low doorway has a dungeon-like aspect, and we look down from the top as into a roofless tower. It apparently has not been used for many years, and the lime and weather-stained fragments of marble are scattered about.

But in the one we saw last night a hard-wood fire was burning merrily, beneath the superincumbent marble, — the kiln being heaped full; and shortly after we came, the man (a dark, black-bearded figure, in shirt-sleeves) opened the iron door, through the chinks of which the fire was gleaming, and thrust in huge logs of wood, and stirred the immense coals with a long pole, and showed us the glowing limestone, — the lower layer of it. The heat of the fire was powerful, at the distance of several yards from the open door. He talked very sensibly with us, being doubtless glad to have two visitors to vary his solitary night-watch; for it would not do for him to fall asleep, since the fire should be refreshed as often as every twenty minutes. We ascended the hillock to the top of the kiln, and the marble was red-hot, and burning with a bluish, lambent flame, quivering up, sometimes nearly a yard high, and resembling the flame of anthracite coal, only, the marble being in large fragments, the flame was higher. The kiln was perhaps six or eight feet across. Four hundred bushels of marble were then in a state of combustion. The expense of converting this quantity into lime is about fifty dollars, and it sells for twenty-five cents per bushel at the kiln. We asked the man whether he would run across the top of the intensely burning kiln, barefooted, for a thousand dollars; and he said he would for ten. He told us that the lime had been burning forty-eight hours, and would

be finished in thirty-six more. He liked the business of watching it better by night than by day; because the days were often hot, but such a mild and beautiful night as the last was just right. Here a poet might make verses with moonlight in them, and a gleam of fierce fire-light flickering through. It is a shame to use this brilliant, white, almost transparent marble in this way. A man said of it, the other day, that into some pieces of it, when polished, one could see a good distance; and he instanced a certain grave-stone.

DESERTED HOUSES.

[*Brook Farm.*] *October* 8, 1841. — In my walk yesterday forenoon I passed an old house which seemed to be quite deserted. It was a two-story, wooden house, dark and weather-beaten. The front windows, some of them, were shattered and open, and others were boarded up. Trees and shrubbery were growing neglected, so as quite to block up the lower part. There was an aged barn near at hand, so ruinous that it had been necessary to prop it up. There were two old carts, both of which had lost a wheel. Everything was in keeping. At first I supposed that there would be no inhabitants in such a dilapidated place; but, passing on, I looked back, and saw a decrepit and infirm old man at the angle of the house, its fit occupant. The grass, however, was very green and beautiful around this dwelling, and, the sunshine falling brightly on it, the whole effect was cheerful and pleasant. It seemed as if the world was so glad that this desolate old place, where there was never to be any more hope and happiness, could not at all lessen the general effect of joy.

I found a small turtle by the roadside, where he had crept to warm himself in the genial sunshine. He had a sable back, and underneath his shell was yellow and at the edges bright scarlet. His head, tail, and claws were striped yellow, black, and red. He withdrew himself as far as he possibly could into his shell, and absolutely refused to peep out, even when I put him into the water. Finally, I threw him into a deep pool and left him. These mailed gentlemen, from the size of a foot or more down to an inch, were very numerous in the spring; and now the smaller kind appear again.

October 13th. — I took a long walk this morning, going first nearly to Newton, thence nearly to Brighton, thence to Jamaica Plain, and thence home. It was a fine morning, with a northwest wind; cool when facing the wind, but warm and most genially pleasant in sheltered spots; and warm enough everywhere while I was in motion. I traversed most of the by-ways which offered themselves to me; and, passing through one in which there was a double line of grass between the wheel-tracks and that of the horses' feet, I came to where had once stood a farm-house, which appeared to have been recently torn down. Most of the old timber and boards had been carted away; a pile of it, however, remained. The cellar of the house was uncovered, and beside it stood the base and middle height of the chimney. The oven, in which household bread had been baked for daily food, and puddings and cake and jolly pumpkin-pies for festivals, opened its mouth, being deprived of its iron door. The fire-place was close at hand. All round the site of the house was a pleasant, sunny,

green space, with old fruit-trees in pretty fair condition, though aged. There was a barn, also aged, but in decent repair; and a ruinous shed, on the corner of which was nailed a boy's windmill, where it had probably been turning and clattering for years together, till now it was black with time and weather-stain. It was broken, but still it went round whenever the wind stirred. The spot was entirely secluded, there being no other house within a mile or two.

WATCHING A SQUIRREL.

[*Brook Farm.*] *October* 18, 1841. — In the hollow of the woods, yesterday afternoon, I lay a long while watching a squirrel, who was capering about among the trees over my head (oaks and white-pines, so close together that their branches intermingled). The squirrel seemed not to approve of my presence, for he frequently uttered a sharp, quick, angry noise, like that of a scissors-grinder's wheel. Sometimes I could see him sitting on an impending bough, with his tail over his back, looking down pryingly upon me. It seems to be a natural posture with him, to sit on his hind legs, holding up his fore paws. Anon, with a peculiarly quick start, he would scramble along the branch, and be lost to sight in another part of the tree, whence his shrill chatter would again be heard. Then I would see him rapidly descending the trunk, and running along the ground; and a moment afterwards, casting my eye upward, I beheld him flitting like a bird among the high limbs at the summit, directly above me. Afterwards, he apparently became accustomed to my society, and set about some business of his own. He came down to the ground,

took up a piece of a decayed bough (a heavy burden for such a small personage), and, with this in his mouth, again climbed up and passed from the branches of one tree to those of another, and thus onward and onward till he went out of sight. Shortly afterwards he returned for another burden, and this he repeated several times. I suppose he was building a nest, — at least, I know not what else could have been his object. Never was there such an active, cheerful, choleric, continually-in-motion fellow as this little red squirrel, talking to himself, chattering at me, and as sociable in his own person as if he had half a dozen companions, instead of being alone in the lonesome wood. Indeed, he flitted about so quickly, and showed himself in different places so suddenly, that I was in some doubt whether there were not two or three of them.

A NAVY IN THE FROG POND.

[*Boston.*] *June* 1, 1842. — One of my chief amusements is to see the boys sail their miniature vessels on the Frog Pond. There is a great variety of shipping owned among the young people, and they appear to have a considerable knowledge of the art of managing vessels. There is a full-rigged man-of-war, with, I believe, every spar, rope, and sail, that sometimes makes its appearance; and, when on a voyage across the pond, it so identically resembles a great ship, except in size, that it has the effect of a picture. All its motions, — its tossing up and down on the small waves, and its sinking and rising in a calm swell, its heeling to the breeze, — the whole effect, in short, is that of a real ship at sea; while, moreover, there is something that kindles the imagina-

tion more than the reality would do. If we see a real, great ship, the mind grasps and possesses, within its real clutch, all that there is of it; while here the mimic ship is the representation of an ideal one, and so gives us a more imaginative pleasure. There are many schooners that ply to and fro on the pond, and pilot-boats, all perfectly rigged. I saw a race, the other day, between the ship above mentioned and a pilot-boat, in which the latter came off conqueror. The boys appear to be well acquainted with all the ropes and sails, and can call them by their nautical names. One of the owners of the vessels remains on one side of the pond, and the other on the opposite side, and so they send the little bark to and fro, like merchants of different countries, consigning their vessels to one another.

Generally, when any vessel is on the pond, there are full-grown spectators, who look on with as much interest as the boys themselves. Towards sunset, this is especially the case: for then are seen young girls and their lovers; mothers, with their little boys in hand; schoolgirls, beating hoops round about, and occasionally running to the side of the pond; rough tars, or perhaps masters or young mates of vessels, who make remarks about the miniature shipping, and occasionally give professional advice to the navigators; visitors from the country; gloved and caned young gentlemen; — in short, everybody stops to take a look. In the mean time, dogs are continually plunging into the pond, and swimming about, with noses pointed upward, and snatching at floating chips; then, emerging, they shake themselves, scattering a horizontal shower on the clean gowns of ladies and trousers of gentlemen; then scamper to and fro on the grass, with joyous barks.

Some boys cast off lines of twine with pin-hooks, and perhaps pull out a horned-pout, — that being, I think, the only kind of fish that inhabits the Frog Pond.

The ship-of-war above mentioned is about three feet from stem to stern, or possibly a few inches more. This, if I mistake not, was the size of a ship-of-the-line in the navy of Lilliput.

A WALK WITH CHILDREN IN THE WOODS.

[*Lenox, Mass.*] *March* 31, 1851. — A walk with the children yesterday forenoon. We went through the wood, where we found partridge-berries, half hidden among the dry, fallen leaves; thence down to the brook. This little brook has not cleansed itself from the disarray of the past autumn and winter, and is much embarrassed and choked up with brown leaves, twigs, and bits of branches. It rushes along merrily and rapidly, gurgling cheerfully, and tumbling over the impediments of stones with which the children and I made little waterfalls last year. At many spots, there are small basins or pools of calmer and smoother depth, — three feet, perhaps, in diameter, and a foot or two deep, — in which little fish are already sporting about; all elsewhere is tumble and gurgle and mimic turbulence. I sat on the withered leaves at the foot of a tree, while the children played, a little brook being the most fascinating plaything that a child can have. Una jumped to and fro across it; Julian stood beside a pool, fishing with a stick, without hook or line, and wondering that he caught nothing. Then he made new waterfalls with mighty labor, pulling big stones out of the earth, and flinging them into the current. Then they sent branches

of trees, or the outer shells of walnuts, sailing down the stream, and watched their passages through the intricacies of the way, — how they were hurried over in a cascade, hurried dizzily round in a whirlpool, or brought quite to a stand-still amongst the collected rubbish. At last Julian tumbled into the brook, and was wetted through and through, so that we were obliged to come home; he squelching along all the way, with his india-rubber shoes full of water.

There are still patches of snow on the hills; also in the woods, especially on the northern margins. The lake is not yet what we may call thawed out, although there is a large space of blue water, and the ice is separated from the shore everywhere, and is soft, water-soaked, and crumbly. On favorable slopes and exposures, the earth begins to look green; and almost anywhere, if one looks closely, one sees the greenness of the grass, or of little herbage, amidst the brown. Under the nut-trees are scattered some of the nuts of last year; the walnuts have lost their virtue, the chestnuts do not seem to have much taste, but the butternuts are in no manner deteriorated. The warmth of these days has a mistiness, and in many respects resembles the Indian summer, and is not at all provocative of physical exertion. Nevertheless, the general impression is of life, not death. One feels that a new season has begun.

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